

97-84065-14

Turner, Harry Smith

The autobiography of a
failure

St. Louis

1913

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	86, (1) p. 22 ¹ cm. \$1.00
	An account of the request for the resignation of the author from the St. Louis Country club, with the correspondence involved.
	i. Title.
	Library of Congress
	Copyright A 361886
	CTZ75.T94A3
	14-2874
	ONLY ED.

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IMAGE PLACEMENT: IA (IIA) IB IIB

DATE FILMED: 4-7-97

INITIALS: fb

TRACKING #: MSH 23319

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The autobiography of a failure

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THE
AUTOBIOGRAPHY
of a
FAILURE
MANHATTAN ST. L.
By Harry Turner

308

Z

Box 184

PRICE ONE DOLLAR

FROM REEDY'S MIRROR, 1913

By WILLIAM MARION REEDY

A SUCCESSFUL FAILURE

MR. HARRY TURNER'S "Autobiography of a Failure" is the cleverest book ever written of or in St. Louis—a marvel of polished workmanship in telling a story that merrily, mockingly unmasks social hypocrisies. And it has more than local interest—it is a sign of the stirring depths beneath the surface of American life. "Clever" doesn't cover it, nor "smart" define it, for there's explosive thought foundationing its fun, and its satire is a corrosive that eats away the anatomy of the system in which only the shallow can longer believe. Mr. Turner has done more than pay off a score. He has sapped and mined the Temple of the Great God Sham. No wonder he was let out of the Country Club, this lion in a den of Daniels.

What was a man of his Nietzschean thought and moral doing in that galley? How an aristocrat in thought scalds an aristocracy of lymphatics, and reveals it as an aggregation of epigones! Can any of the *elite* write the answer that will explain why they asked the author of "The Autobiography of a Failure" to resign from the Country Club, to get from between the wind and their nobility? Or is it *infra dig* for them to write anything but cheques? Why 'd they "can" him? Do they hate genius?



Nicholas Murray Butler, Esq.

Pres. Columbia University

New York City—

The Autobiography of a Failure

By HARRY TURNER

If you have never read it, you can know nothing of the inside social, political and financial history of St. Louis, from which the future is derived, of course. SEND ONE DOLLAR—THAT'S ALL.

COMMENT:

From ORRICK JOHNS, New York:

"I wrote my letters upside down this morning between peeps in 'The Autobiography of a Failure.' It woos me. It caresses my thought. I have fed from place to place in it, browsed, mused, with an exquisite sensation, as of music, or of twilight, or of something that surmounts and possesses me utterly.

"It has always been a question to me what was the exact nature of your genius. I now know it is as essayist—English essayist of the first magnitude. I suspect the only living essayist. Your book has that quality. It makes you. The French Academy would have crowned it. . . .

"P. S. I have finished it. I have read it twice. I take nothing back. If anything I am willing to add. The book grows on me. Frankly it is in a class with Mark Twain and Whistler. It will be kindly remembered by choice spirits for many long years."

From ALBERT STEINHAUSER, New Ulm, Minn.:

" . . . It has been highly recommended to me by A. C. Wagner, of Minneapolis, who pronounces it the biggest, boldest, most inclusive philosophy of life he ever heard of. . . ."

From ADOLPH MERDINGER, St. Louis:

" . . . Being a most omnivorous reader, I wish to assure you I have never enjoyed anything so humorous as your lampooning. You reveal the truth behind a veil of richest humor. I pronounce your 'Failure' a brilliant success. . . ."

From THE NEW ST. LOUIS STAR:

"Harry Turner's 'Autobiography of a Failure,' apart from its local flavor as a scaring social exposure is a piece of work in the style of 'The Yellow Book.' It is fulfilled of the tang of Oscar Wilde, George Bernard Shaw and James McNeil Whistler. . . . It is a Nietzschean proclamation, an assertion of unmorality, of a right and duty beyond our values of good and evil."

THE
AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF A FAILURE

By HARRY TURNER



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PUBLISHERS
SAINT LOUIS

9719
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
9-2-25.

Foreword

I submitted the manuscript of this abbreviated memoir to the President of the Board of Governors of the New Saint Louis Country Club, in order that any inaccuracies occurring therein might be called to my attention. The manuscript was held for a month by that body and then returned to me without comment.

Observation: There is a chasm between dumbness and silence; in fact, the two are antitheses. Under which head the muteness of the Board comes, I do not pretend to be able to say. Should I allege that their taciturnity was caused by dumbness, they will hold dumbly that silence is at the bottom of it, and they are bound to be right for they are ten to one, and the majority is always right in a Democracy.

Be that as it may, if some one had written as frankly about himself as I have written about myself in this memoir, I should certainly buy his book. It would be necessary to buy it, for one would never be able to get it from the library, on account of the demand, even if the library had it. Were it not for its frankness, I shouldn't recommend it to a friend—if I possessed one. Like the political orator, whose name a negro voter could not remember, but about whom the latter remarked, nevertheless, that he had "certainly given himself a mighty fine recommendation," I have done my best. If you do not think that I am all right after reading this book, you're prejudiced, that's all.

To be able to make money out of a situation as herein described by selling a book about it, is forever to dispose of the only charge that I have heard made against me, viz.: that I am not "a good business man."

"Woe unto the happy, full-blooded aristocrat! Mental and physical cripples will overpower him by sheer force of numbers—they will even invent a hell for him, a place of eternal torment."

—Friedrich Nietzsche.

CHAPTER I.

Having learned so much that I now know nothing, I shall proceed to write a book.

In order that the following story may be comprehensible, it is necessary that I preface it with some facts about myself; where I came from, who I am and what I have done with myself to date.

I am not at all sure that what I am about to recite will be interesting. I write it as I have written most things, merely as a cure for nervousness. I am far too cynical to think that my statement of the case will convert anyone to my view of it, and I am far too tired of the subject to care whether it does or not. I have discovered, however, that if I write a thing that is on my mind, or that is puzzling me, it seems to shift the burden, and I can go on and think of something else.

I was born in either 1875 or 76 at Normandy, Missouri, on Christmas day. I have never been able to determine definitely in which of the two years the overpowering event occurred. Some members of my family have said one year and some another, and naturally my own memory would be unreliable in a matter of that sort. I have never regarded the accuracy of the date as of sufficient importance to warrant an exhaustive investigation. That one is here in the world through no fault of his own is the important thing; the date of the incident is a trivial matter.

To those who object to the liberal use of the pronoun I, and to those who believe that psychoanalysis is a repellant form of egotism, I would say that they had best proceed no further. As for myself, I am always interested to hear a person discourse about himself without affectation or concealment, for I assume that he knows something of his subject, and it is extremely doubtful if that can be said when he allows himself the luxury of discussing others, for true psychologists are rare aves.

In fact, I think that most of the evils of the world come from misunderstanding, and misunderstanding comes largely from a false conception of the meaning of modesty. We are all afraid to reveal ourselves as we are. We go on through life concealing with great pains our worst and our best thoughts, but principally the latter, until one day we see a play or read a book in which some artist has stripped us naked, torn away our mask, and held us up to view, and we blush and are ashamed and mutter that the play is overdrawn, or that the book is untrue to life, or that the artist is a sentimentalist. With our dying breaths we will protest that we are not what we are.

I am intensely interested in myself. I am a never-ending source of surprise to myself. The study and analysis of my own

moods keep me quite well occupied. No doubt that is egotism, but it is the truth, which is more important, and besides if one is not an egotist, what sense is there in life at all? In fact, to be interested in someone else, on the theory that the other will reciprocate, is superlative egotism.

I cannot remember a time when I was not in love, or thought I was, and so I can say, in a general way, that all my life has been divided between thinking of some woman or other, and self analysis. However, there has hardly been a period since I finished school that I have not been engaged in some business, but I always regarded business as a conventional sort of thing that had to be endured, for some reason which I had not fathomed, and I generally managed it with the little finger of my left hand.

When I say that my interests were divided between some woman and myself, I do not mean that quite literally, nor that I spent all of my time gazing at my own belly, like a Chinese God, or in performing psychological vivisection on some specimen of femininity, but I mean that literature, the theatre, music, nature, everything that attracted me, I realized at bottom led back to me or to a woman, and not necessarily to a woman sexually considered. There is nothing interesting in sex to me—in the abstract—although I see nothing wrong in it. It is no different in man than in the lower animals (or shouldn't be), and as a subject for study it is quickly exhausted. The Latins said all there was to be said about sex, long before the Anglo-Saxons discovered its existence. But the soul of a woman is the most fascinating, absorbing, never-ending interest a man can have, and I think the most legitimate.

Part of my education was received in a Catholic College. I know priests. It is possible they believe the things they teach. It is not possible that I could. I am not a Catholic.

When I was sixteen years old, I went to Colorado and entered the railroad business as a clerk in the auditor's office. Whether it was my superior ability or a certain "pull" that did it, I have never cared to decide even for myself, but in less than a year I became General Manager's secretary.

Railroading in Colorado was an interesting life in those days. The operation of the road was dangerous and exciting, and outside of the office there was also romance and to spare. Colorado was the scene of my first love affair. I was seventeen. She, of course, was much older and married, and very beautiful and all that. I should not care to see her now. One should hold to one's illusions if possible. I don't know but that it would be a good thing for every boy of seventeen if he could have a love affair with a married woman of thirty and be discarded by her. It fits him for life far more quickly and inexpensively than the usual method of getting married, or going through college.

Toward the end of my third year in Colorado, the General Manager was caught robbing the company, by means of a system of rebates to shippers; that is, the road was charged

with the rebates and the shippers never received them, or received only part of them. There was no prosecution, because both the shippers and the railroads were engaged in rebate transactions, which were criminal offenses against the laws. The General Manager was also implicated in a system of carrying straw men on the payrolls, but I do not believe he ever received the "profits," for I, as his secretary, would have known it. At any rate another man was convicted and got ten years' sentence and was pardoned in two.

I have often wondered what the effect would have been on me of this experience had I been seriously intent on becoming a successful business man. I imagine I should have become either completely discouraged or a great crook. What a pity I was not more serious!

After the exposé, the General Manager "resigned," and as is customary, I did too, and came to St. Louis, where I became secretary to the General Manager of one of the large trunk lines. I held this position for two years and until that gentleman suspected that I had conveyed information to his wife regarding his numerous amours along the line from Texas to Colorado. I was not guilty. In fact, I have never been guilty of anything like that; it would have been a sin against my nature, but I was weary of the position anyway, and felt that I would as lief be the scape-goat as to see someone else lose his position, who no doubt needed it, and so I resigned.

As I look back on it now, I think those two years were perhaps the most profitable in my life from an experience standpoint (and what other is there?). It cannot be denied, too, that there is a certain fascination in the railroad business, if one is in position to regard it romantically. Even in being a general manager's secretary, there is a feeling of power, and a certain sort of satisfaction, that I have never been able to analyze. There is a pleasure in giving an order and seeing it carried out down to the last man in an organization of ten thousand. I do not know but that my position was as interesting as any in the service. I was in touch with every department of the road and in confidential relations with the "visible head of the church on earth"; and was in a place to see all that transpired, without suffering from a feeling of responsibility, that of necessity goes with the office of general manager.

There are no end of amusing incidents constantly occurring in a big railroad organization. There are thrills, too, such as one gets when a rush message comes into the office to the effect that Coxey's army has stolen a freight train at Pueblo and is coming East at a terrific rate, with no orders, and the cars filled with "weary Willies." I remember my admiration for the General Manager went up several points that morning, as I saw him read that message, realize at once what it meant, and rush to the telegraph key, where he personally handled the whole situation.

The division superintendent had, of course, sidetracked all trains and the trick was to catch Coxey. The "Old Man" hesitated

a moment, while he held the line open, and then he began to telegraph as though he were sending Associated Press stuff and was afraid they would take the line away from him before he got it all over. About two hours later he got word that Coxey and his army had deserted the train and taken to their heels. What the "Old Man" had done was to telegraph to two water tanks ahead of the stolen train, instructing the agents to drain the tanks. At the third station there was a tank that had been abandoned on account of alkali water. Here was where the Coxey engine replenished its supply.

For those who are not versed in such matters, I will explain that alkali creates a foam in the boiler of an engine that puts it out of commission as effectively, or more so, than if there was no water at all; even a fresh tank will foam for awhile.

It was clever work to regain possession of the line and the train without a wreck or a fight, and the General Manager's prompt action showed how clearly he carried that five thousand miles of railroad in his head. Were it not for this ability, or gift, I should have had nothing but contempt for this man, for in every other sense he was very small.

There is something about a railroad that makes grafting seem legitimate. If there was anyone on this line that was not "getting his," I cannot think of him right now. One of my duties was the countersigning of passes. We had a general superintendent's chief clerk who, it seemed to me, issued a great deal of free transportation to "roadmaster's wives." On one occasion I discovered that one "roadmaster's wife" had traveled from a point in Arkansas (a well-known health resort) at the same time she was supposed to be returning. So, acting entirely without malice, but merely to show a proper attention to duty, I wrote a letter to the chief clerk requesting an explanation, and asked the "Old Man" to sign it personally, which he did, and wrote on the bottom of it, "We want 'Quid pro Con' for every pass issued from your office." He was very fond of Latin phrases, and got them off on all occasions very much as a parrot would, always inaccurately and with no distinct idea of their meaning. The answer from the Chief Clerk came addressed to me. It was "Peccavi, Peccavi." "That means," said the General Manager when I showed it to him, "that my orders were received and understood."

"Yes, sir," I replied, and the incident was closed.

These railroad experiences have nothing whatever to do with the "central theme" of this tale, except insofar as they may have influenced me in forsaking a business career, and I will relate only a few more of them and then pass on.

Among my other duties it fell to me to order supplies to stock private cars. Whenever an order was placed I invariably received a box of cigars from the grocer, and always the butcher remembered me at Thanksgiving, Christmas and other days set aside for feasting and merriment, with a turkey or a few prairie chickens or some other delicacy, but that it was grafting never

occurred to me. In fact, I don't think the word was used in that connection in those days.

I recall having gone home on one occasion (I lived then at Normandy in St. Louis County) to spend Sunday. About eleven that night, after everyone had retired, a messenger came from the city with a letter for me from our chief clerk, saying that the president of the railroad company (who was on his way from New York to Omaha, and thence to Buffalo Bill's ranch in Nebraska, where a hunting expedition had been planned) had suddenly changed his mind at Detroit, would reach St. Louis at seven in the morning and desired to leave for the South as soon thereafter as possible.

It was eleven-thirty when I had finished reading the letter. It meant a special train, composed of engine, commissary car, vice president's, general manager's and general superintendent's cars, and that they would all have to be cleaned and stocked, the train made up and in the station, ready to go, by seven A. M.

I gave the messenger who had brought the letter the addresses of all the cooks and porters—I had them in my head fortunately—and told him to have them meet me at the grocer's, as near one o'clock as possible, and then I sent him away on the last train returning to the city.

After that I dressed, and, in the meantime a horse had been hitched to a buggy for me, and I drove in to town where I could get a telephone. Here I called up the superintendent of motive power, and got him out of bed. I impressed on him the urgency of getting our regular engine and crew and the balance of the train in readiness and backed into the station at seven o'clock.

"Why the two-sixty-four is pulling number three and left here at nine tonight," he said.

"Where is she now?" I asked.

"Somewhere about S——," he answered.

"Well, wire the agent there to turn her back and let number three grab a freight engine somewhere."

"All right," he said, and hung up the receiver.

I then called up the butcher and grocer at their respective homes, and explained the situation. They agreed to go to their stores and open them, and to get wagons to haul the supplies to the station.

Fortunately all the negro cooks and porters were on hand, and helped load the wagons. At six-thirty we were at Union Station, but the train had not yet backed in. The wagons were driven through the Twentieth street entrance, and then we found we could not get out of the midway to the tracks, without tearing out a part of the iron fence that separates them, so this was done, and the procession of wagons drove out and lined up alongside of track twenty-two. A few minutes later the Special backed slowly in. Immediately a small army of car cleaners was at work inside and outside and on the roof like a swarm of flies, and in fifteen or twenty minutes the cars were cleaned and ready to stock.

The train from the East, luckily, was twenty minutes late, due to hauling the heavy car of the President. I hoped against hope that it might be further delayed in the yards, for it was apparent that it was not humanly possible to stock four cars in the time before us, but the President's train pulled in just twenty minutes late.

Mike, our engineer, was grouchy oiling around. He had been up all night. "What the hell does this mean, and where are we going?" he asked me as I came up to him. "Ask me something easy," I replied. "We are going South, that's all I know."

The train from the East had now discharged its passengers and had pulled out, after cutting off the President's car. Our "Special" then ran out beyond the signal tower and backed down "on to" the big yellow car from New York. In the meantime it was necessary for the wagons to drive around to track twenty-one. Here the cooks and porters and helpers were pitching boxes and bottles and packages as fast as they could, as I came up. Just at this juncture, the President appeared on the platform of his car, in dressing gown and smoking a cigar. "Why aren't we off?" he asked, and then, "What are those wagons doing there? Those things should be attended to at the proper time."

"Yes, sir," I said,—which is the correct form to use in addressing a superior.

The anti-climax of the situation struck me as being amusing, and I looked at the conductor and smiled. He winked at me, and then raising his right hand, gave the signal, and we pulled slowly out of the yards, with about half of the supplies still in the wagons.

We learned during the course of the day that we were bound for Texas where the President wished to do some shooting, and that we were expected to run three hundred and fifty-two miles before dark. We did it, but the fireman fainted with exhaustion and his place had to be taken by the train porter.

"Those things should be attended to at the proper time," kept running through my head all that day. I wondered why I gave myself so much trouble. The hundred and fifty dollars a month was of no importance to me. Apparently one's efforts are of importance only to oneself. The more I reflected on it, the sillier I felt. The absurdity of working, of giving oneself endless trouble, except when it was the only means of preserving life—seemed as plain as a pike staff. The utter fatuity of the whole expedition was borne in on me that night. Here we were, a small army of men, operating a special train costing well over two thousand dollars a day, that the President might kill a few birds and other things in Texas.

There were two guards patrolling the train that night, with Winchester slung over their shoulders. I met them as I returned from the telegraph office and I had to explain who I was. I made up my mind later as I lay in bed thinking, that there was really very little difference between being conspicuously rich and being on

the rock pile, for, in both circumstances, one is guarded by men with Winchester. I felt what little ambition I had oozing, and some three weeks later, when the general manager voiced his suspicions about my having carried tales to his wife, I was too tired of the whole business to deny it, and thus ended a most promising career as a railroad magnate.

I never will know what induced me to go into the stock brokerage business. I met a friend at lunch one day, and that afternoon I was a broker. Stock brokerage is either farce-comedy or tragedy, depending on how you look at it. I was expected, as a broker, to go up to a customer who was studying the board, and advise him to buy or sell a certain stock, about which I didn't know, or couldn't know, more than the man in the moon. I didn't mind doing it, but to ask me to keep a straight face was too much. I always expected the customer to say: "Why don't you buy it?" but none ever did. Perhaps that wouldn't be ethical, in the stock brokerage business.

The tragic part of the game is, so far as my observation went, that everyone who speculates eventually loses, and often embezzles. I remember visiting the insane asylum at Farmington, Mo., a year or more after concluding my Wall street career, and seeing one of our ex-customers, who had "gone broke" in the office. He had been a very well-known "society man." When I saw him he was stark naked, and the attendants said clothes could not be kept on him; that he tore them into strips, and that he imagined the strips were ticker tape and that he was reading quotations. He's dead now. I didn't like the brokerage business at all.

I tried real estate after that. This is a business in which you sell your goods for one price and put another in the deed which you advertise in the papers as the correct price. When you are not doing this you are engaged in the congenial task of evicting tenants who can't pay the rent, or foreclosing mortgages. I didn't enthuse over the real estate business.

And so I gave up a commercial career, not because I found it all crooked; not that I wouldn't have stolen "success" merrily and cruelly as the rest of them were doing, had it been necessary, but simply because it seemed to me the quintessence of stupidity to go against one's nature when there was no pressing need for it.

By way of amusement, after a year or two of idleness (I think it was in the summer of 1889), I purchased in a little town in Massachusetts, a Stanley steam carriage. It was the first automobile the people of St. Louis or I had ever seen, and naturally it attracted much attention on the streets. It led finally to my taking an agency for the manufacturer and opening a small store. I wanted something to do, and this did not seem to be a legitimate business. I thought at first it would be merely something to occupy my time. It was perfectly marvelous how those things sold. Sober, solid business men would journey up to my little store on Twelfth street and pay seven or

eight hundred dollars for a toy that was not only useless but was positively dangerous. Truly, "men are but children of a larger growth."

Before I knew it I was in business again and up to my ears. So fast did the trade increase that I was forced to move up town into larger quarters. Then the gasoline car came. I think I was the first local possessor of one of these devil's devices of the present accepted standard, viz.: vertical cylinders and sliding gear transmission. And still the business grew and grew until it got to be a horrible bore.

About this time one of my most intimate friends purchased a car from me, and a week or so later telephoned to the garage one night to have the machine sent to his house. The man in charge reported over the 'phone that the car was out, whereupon my friend assumed that I, and one Edgar Lackland, were "joy riding" in the same, and gave the police instructions to arrest us on sight. The fact was that Edgar and I were passing a week end at the Illini Yacht Club, above Alton, and were surprised to receive the papers containing accounts of our disappearance with the gentleman's automobile. It turned out that the garage foreman had made an error and did not know the car referred to, which was all the while reposing peacefully on the garage floor. My friend hastened to make amend by going to the newspapers and withdrawing his charge, which he said had been made in the way of a joke. However, this amend turned out to be more disastrous than the injury, for it advertised the fact that our garage was an unreliable place in which to keep one's property, and of course all clever people saw through the apology as being merely the desire of a friend to help me out. Our esteemed competitors nursed this view and it became quite general. Our attorney suggested a suit for damages, but I could not see what good the money would do me, as I should only have spent it on my friend from whom it had been obtained, in an effort to regain his friendship, which I then did, and do now, value more highly than a few dollars.

Incidents like these and frequent arrests for speeding by a single officer who was irritated with us because we persisted in trying to collect a bill of fifty-four dollars for repairs to an automobile owned by this gentleman (his name was Ferguson), caused us to be looked upon with suspicion by our bankers. Finally the president of the bank (a gentleman of Jewish blood, but not a bad fellow by any means) "called" us. I, in turn, called his attention to the fact that he had charged us one per cent for the use of money for ten days, which was at the rate of thirty-six per cent or over for the year and somewhat in excess of the figure permitted by law, whereupon the said banker asked me if I "couldn't take a joke."

Now, I do not claim to possess any great amount of humor, and so the jokes of my friends and my banker began to bore me. They were what one might call impractical jokes, which are worse than the other kind, and so after starting a motor bus

line across the river, a trucking company and a corporation which introduced the taxicab to St. Louis (an offense, by the way, for which I should have been banished), I betook myself to the woods of Northern New York, in the Adirondack Mountains, where I remained all summer, excommunicado.

On my return home in the Fall, I discovered that my manager had, in my absence, expanded still further, and that my little Stanley steam carriage had grown into a sort of American Car and Foundry Company. I felt sure there was a catch in it somewhere. It came out the day after my return, in the form of a number of unpaid accounts and other obligations which I was supposed to personally care for, but which I had had none of the fun of incurring; also I discovered that some of our rich patrons were not paying their bills with that alacrity that might be expected from the owner of a hundred thousand dollar home in Portland or Westmoreland Place.

Now, I do not believe in corporations. It seems to me that every individual should be responsible for his acts, business or personal, but then I did not make the laws. I tried conscientiously for three days to sell the business, but all of the people who had been anxious to get in were now of another mind. It would have been an excellent thing for anyone who was ambitious to have bought, but I have found that there is nothing so rare in the world as individual judgment. It was impossible to convince anyone that I had no ambition to be a "captain of industry," and that was why I wished to sell. They were too smart to believe that. If one wants to get out of business in America it must be because he has to. To wish to do anything but eat, drink, grab and breed is an indication of weakened mentality.

I was never in doubt as to the wonderful proportions the automobile industry would reach. I remember one evening some eight or ten years ago discussing the subject with Mr. Fred Lehmann, among others, in Faustus' Cafe. I made the statement that within ten years the horse would be the exception. I visualized the motor truck, the taxi-cab, the motor bus and gasoline farm machinery. The other members of the party were so disgusted with me as to be unable to conceal it, but Mr. Lehmann was politely skeptical, and, as a lesson to me for the future in the matter of spinning cobwebs, we all, at his suggestion, got into my automobile and journeyed to his home in South St. Louis, although it was nearly two in the morning. There, after quite a search, Mr. Lehmann located the object of the journey, a water color by Cruikshank, done in the time of Dickens, showing a number of horses turned out to pasture, and a steam omnibus passing on the highway. It was called "The Passing of the Horse." Still I learned no lesson from it.

While I regard money beyond one's needs for the simplest sort of a life as a more or less imaginary thing, and success as purely a question of what one's individual definition of the word is, I can still understand how one must pursue those will-

o-the-wisps as long as they appear to him to be real and desirable things. The differences in men are largely differences in their imaginative qualities. For instance, the philosopher can reason that war in a mechanical age is a stupid and cruel thing, and requires nothing but his imagination to arrive at that conclusion. The unimaginative person, however, must actually see an aeroplane in action and visualize its power of destruction, before he can appreciate the futility of wholesale murder in the name of the flag or of patriotism.

However, if one is incapable of creating anything from a saw buck to a poem, he must be a business man. He has no other means of livelihood, but he should not pride himself on his incapacity, and an arrogant attitude toward his superiors, the artisan and the artist, is at least unbecoming.

Running a big business is like keeping a ball, a plate, a walking stick and a silk hat in the air at the same time. It can be done by nearly anyone who will practice it sincerely, and the onlookers will say "marvelous," but what's the use, if one doesn't like it.

On the fourth day after my return from the Adirondacks, I was called up at home by one of the corporation's creditors. I remember I was in the midst of Montaigne's essays, and the incident of being interrupted was so annoying, that I decided on the spot to turn the business over to the creditors and let them run it, if they wished. With that in view I telephoned a firm of attorneys and they advised me that the only method of accomplishing what I desired was to place the concern in bankruptcy, which I instructed them to do.

And thus ended a long and amusing flirtation with the Goddess of America. I came out by the same door as in I went, which I believe is better luck than most have who become entangled with the Goddess.

If one does not believe in business he can no more make a success of it than he could make an honest confession to a priest if he were not a Catholic. I shall always have a tender spot in my heart for old Montaigne.



CHAPTER II.

I had a great feeling of relief—of freedom—when it was all over. It was delightful to lie in bed in the mornings and read, or get up and fuss about with books, and to feel that one did not have to go to a damnable office and lie and lie and lie.

In the succeeding days I played a little at golf, rode horseback, read a great deal, went to a dinner occasionally and generally lived an honest life.

I have always loved to drift. Bernard Shaw says: "To drift is to be in Hell, to steer is to be in Heaven," and Napoleon says on the other hand: "A man who doesn't know where he is going, is probably going far." Careful observation has taught me that the ones who steer hit as many rocks as the ones who drift. The principal difference is that the steerers have a set and serious countenance, while the drifters "go laughing down the fleeting mile." And, after all, is it not more satisfactory (or rather less unsatisfactory) to strike a rock when you are drifting than when you have your hand on the rudder? In the former case Fate is to blame and not you. However, be that as it may, there is no doubt that Napoleon is right, for by drifting I found myself in St. Louis Society.

It is very amusing to be in society. To receive a telephone message at five requesting one's presence at a dinner at seven, to realize that one is asked to fill in as a last resort, to take the place of some guest who at the final moment was prevented from attending, is altogether charming. It is like an adventure to go to a dinner under these circumstances, and I never sidestep an adventure.

The form of the invitation is usually something like this: "Oh, is that you, Mr. Turner? I've been trying to get you for days. Where in the world do you hide?"

"No wonder you couldn't find me," you reply, "I've been up in the country shooting for a week past." (The sight of a shot gun makes me nervous, and I have never killed anything larger than a fly in my life.) After this prelude comes the invitation. Not being accustomed to the ways of society, you reply, "Why, yes, I'll be delighted." This is not the way at all. If you were versed in the ways of the polite world, you would say, "Can I call you in half an hour? I have an engagement to dine with the Van Rensaellers tonight, but I'd so much rather go to you. I'll try to get off by telling them I'm suddenly called out of town or something."

Then the thing to do is to watch the clock and at the end of half an hour, or better thirty-five minutes, you call up and say something like this: "I've fixed it—Had an awful time getting off—Be sure and keep my secret—Seven, did you say?"

The purpose of all this is to show that you are a person not to be trifled with socially, and to insure future popularity.

I much prefer these last minute invitations. The premeditated affair, where you receive the note a week or so before the event, stick it in the mirror as a memorandum, and then forget to look at yourself that day (as only people not in society ever forget to do) and the event comes and goes while you are playing pool at the club, does not appeal to me. It is too cut and dried. I like to reflect on the frame of mind of the hostess who has asked seven girls and seven men to dine and, at the last moment, one of the men has declined. I like to picture her telephoning all of the available men of her acquaintance, but without result, for one reason or another, and then just as she is becoming desperate, or perhaps after she has become so, thinking of me. Then her indecision, and the final plunge. My prompt acceptances, I always feel, leave her with a sense of having committed a social error.

On the evening of receiving one of these calls for help, I proceed as follows: At six-thirty, I take my bath, and after that I dress with great care. As a rule everything goes all right until I get to the white waistcoat. Never have I attempted to don this sartorial piece de resistance, but I am one or more buttons shy. My usual procedure at this juncture is to punch a hole in the fabric of the waistcoat with my penknife and insert a sleeve button. After that I pose before the mirror to note if the deception will be discovered. If everything seems satisfactory to my critical eye, I mix a cocktail, drink it, light a cigarette, walk down two flights of stairs, step into my car and shortly thereafter arrive at the scene of gaiety.

I usually find that I am the first to arrive. This is due to absent-mindedness. I invariably forget that seven does not mean seven in society. The maid looks surprised, but admits me when she observes that I am properly attired. I am shown into a sepulchral drawing room. The dining room is immediately behind it and only separated by draperies. I know it is the dining room by the sound of rattling silver and clashing dishes. "There are only fifteen spoons," I hear from behind the draperies in a stage whisper. "Put a kitchen spoon at Mr. Billings' place," I hear in another deep stage whisper. Mr. Billings is the husband of the hostess.

Above stairs there are sounds of tramping feet and much scurrying about, and a few minutes later the hostess descends, a vision of loveliness.

"I'm so glad you've come," she says. "Really you're the hardest person to find."

It is very difficult to lie gracefully on one cocktail, unless one has a social instinct, so I merely say, "Am I?" After that there is silence for awhile, and then the hostess to relieve her own embarrassment—nothing short of an earthquake could do anything for me—calls, "Hurry up, William, Mr. Turner is here."

Enter William in short dinner coat and black tie. He almost forgets to speak in his consternation at observing my full evening regalia.

More guests arrive. The men are also in long coats and white waistcoats, looking as uncomfortable as people with good reputations always do. Mr. Billings absents himself unobtrusively, to return a few minutes later, just as some more guests arrive. This time he is also magnificent in de rigueur costume. The last arrivals are Mr. and Mrs. Fitzhugh, Miss Carroll and Mr. Carter from New York. The latter is in dinner coat with black tie. He is introduced to everyone and the conversation takes on a general tone of heaviness about subjects lighter than air. Again Mr. Billings disappears, to return forthwith in short dinner coat, but with white tie and white waistcoat—a sort of compromise. His better-half gives him one of those inquiring looks, which he returns with a short, quick glance of defiance, as though to say: "I don't care—this goes."

It is nearly eight when dinner is announced, the draperies are thrown back, and the hostess loses one of the wrinkles in her forehead.

Little cards are placed about the table bearing the names of the guests, and indicating where they are to sit. I observe that I am between a debutante and a married woman of reputation for austerity. It is my habit after delicately placing the chair under my dinner partner on my right to say something tactful, witty and pithy, as I take my own seat. I usually say: "I knew I should be lucky today." This gives the ladies on either side an opportunity to inquire "Why?" which they do simultaneously, with artfully simulated interest. "Because," I reply in my most gracious and insinuating manner, "I found a four-leaf clover, hence this seat." My idea is to start the ball rolling. Sometimes it works and sometimes not. If there is a lull, which there often is, I drink my cocktail, the debutante sips a glass of water, and the austere one gazes straight ahead.

It has always been very difficult for me to converse at the same time I am receiving impressions. It is like expecting a storage battery to give off current at the moment it is being charged, and with the exception of my opening remark, I have no canned conversation.

The debutante breaks the ice. "Oh, Mr. Turner," she says, turning in her seat with carefully cultivated impulsiveness, "I hear you are wonderfully clever!" (Business of beating the chest with both hands and looking interested.) "Do say something clever."

You begin to speak, but everything goes black before you. The table seems to be floating in the air. Your lips are dry and your voice sounds far away. At length you hear yourself saying: "I am afraid that my reputation has been exaggerated," and then you try to look inscrutable, as though you had said something bright and snappy.

There are two maids waiting on the table, who hold something out at you, all the while studying the face of the hostess, who is accomplishing that peculiarly feminine trick of talking to the man next to her with her mouth and managing the maids with her eyes.

There is a long delay before the wine comes, or so it seems to me, filled in with talk that at times borders on conversation, but never quite reaches it. After the wine is poured things begin to take form. Mr. Billings tilts his mask a little to one side, and enters into animated conversation with Mr. Smithers about the effect of the elections on the wholesale hardware business. The debutante forsakes me entirely for the young man on the left, evidently with the mental reservation that what I had observed about my reputation being exaggerated was quite true, and I am left alone on a desert island with the austere person whose name I cannot for the life of me remember. She knows me, though, by reputation. I can tell it by the expression of hauteur in the back of her head.

"Delightful hostess, Mrs. Billings?" I observe.

The austere one turns and looks at me. "Mrs. Billings is more than a good hostess, she is a good mother," she says in what seems to me a tone of rebuke.

"You bet she is," I reply, and wonder what that has to do with it.

Later I make another attempt, which also ends in disaster, and then I give up that lead and confine myself to looking over the flowers at the girl across the table, as though I had endless things to say to her, if the opportunity would only present itself, and with a mental note to take good care that it does not.

One can always tell when a dinner is nearly over by observing the careworn look of the hostess gradually disappear, and by the increasingly obtrusive joviality of the host. I always begin to feel better then, and find the wine improving in aroma. By the time the ladies have departed, leaving the men to their cigars, I am feeling almost as well as before I came. Paradoxical as it may seem, however, this is the time when I suffer most, for I am conscious of a desire to talk welling up in me.

"Strange," I observe, looking at the gentleman who has taken the young lady's seat across the table, "what an iconoclastic age we live in. Did you notice that story in this morning's paper to the effect that they have discovered that even Rameses the Second was a faker?" (I had intended to finish my sentence with the statement that the story was to the effect that he had not built the pyramids, but had only inscribed his name on them, but was interrupted by my vis-a-vis.) "What," says he, growing almost excited, "have they gone in the Trust?" I do not understand the allusion at this time, but am informed later that the gentleman is in the retail cigar and cigarette trade, and that there is a cigarette named after the Egyptian.

From the end of the table, I catch the words: "American Lady." "The American woman, in my opinion," I volunteer, enthusiastically, "is the equal of any woman in the world. Perhaps from

the standpoint of ——" I am continuing, when I observe a blank look on the face of the gentleman to whom I have addressed my remark. "We were talking of The American Lady shoes, made by Smith & Jones," says he with vast irony.

After that I subside into meditative silence, and a little later we adjourn to the drawing room.

After attending a social function in St. Louis, it is my invariable rule to drop in the saloon on the corner and talk socialism with the bartender until he closes up, which no doubt shows that a silk purse cannot be made from a sow's ear.

I hasten to explain, however, that I am not interested in "isms," but that I am interested in a bartender, or in anyone else who sincerely believes in something and talks and acts as he feels. That sort are so refreshing and naive, after a plunge into society. On the other hand there is nothing so rejuvenating as "society," after one has been talking overmuch to bartenders.

To my mind the most successful woman in the world today, judged by any or all of the standards, save perhaps that of the envious scandal-monger, is Miss Maxine Elliot. On an occasion some years since I was lunching with her at the Country Club, and suddenly remembering a ball to be given that evening, suggested that she permit me to accompany her. She seemed pleased at the prospect, said she would wear a new gown just received from Paris, and for me to meet her at the Garrick stage entrance after the performance. It seemed to me that she would lend grace and esprit to the affair, which I anticipated it would not be overburdened with, and so imagine my surprise to be informed by my hostess when I asked over the telephone for an invitation for Miss Elliot, that I was an outrageous person for even suggesting such a thing. With my distorted sense of valuations I had thought Miss Elliot was conferring a favor upon St. Louis society in appearing, but it was no such thing.

I struggled with my problem for the rest of the afternoon, and then threw myself on Miss Elliot's mercy. She laughed heartily, just as I might have known a clever woman of the world would, and then musingly said "What a charming story to tell Lady Randolph when I return to London."

In thinking the matter over, I have concluded that the reason I have lost my taste for society is because I have become blasé. It must be that, for I can remember when, some ten years ago, I went with enthusiasm to dinners, presided over by women of grace and tact and breeding, where I found men of culture and wit and sympathy, or so they seemed to me, but no doubt that was the effect of the rose-colored glasses of youth, for, as everyone knows, the St. Louis of today is socially far ahead of the town of ten years since.

CHAPTER III.

When my interest in society began to wane, I seriously be-thought me of marriage, thereby reversing the usual order. Matrimony, as Robert Louis Stevenson has observed, is a more serious affair than death. My apartment overlooked a busy boulevard, and I was in the habit, after my coffee in the morning, to lie in the window seat and observe the people in their goings and comings. I was engaged in this congenial occupation one morning, and ruminating as usual on the subject then uppermost in my mind, when I observed a lady bustling out of the hotel opposite. Her maid followed, carrying a large box. The chauffeur held the door of the limousine open, and I could see her giving directions to the maid and the chauffeur. She seemed overwrought and anxious. "No doubt," I thought, "she is going to the modiste's, and the box contains a gown that must be refitted." Finally she is inside the car. The chauffeur cranks the motor, but it gives forth a report like the explosion of dynamite and apparently does not start. He cranks again, but there is no result. He opens the door and talks with his mistress. Then he goes up the stairs and into the hotel. He returns anon and removes the hood from the engine. I recognize the car as one I sold to a gentleman who gave a note for part payment, which he afterwards had great difficulty in meeting. Soon a force of mechanics arrives and after half an hour of labor the motor starts and they are off, to the modiste's. On other mornings when I have been awake at an early hour, I have observed the husband of this lady walking toward the car on the corner in a dignified manner. I have seen him suddenly drop his dignity and run for the overcrowded car half way down the block, and be pulled aboard by the passengers on the back platform.

Thinking of these things caused me to ponder more seriously than ever on marriage. Try as I would I could not bring myself to believe that I should wade through other people's blood to acquire a limousine and a wife and a chauffeur and a maid and modiste's bills. Life seemed so simple. Why should one complicate it unnecessarily, I wondered.

My principal objection to marriage, in the abstract, is that it limits the imagination. As things are, the world is mine, so to speak. If the fancy overtakes me, I need never finish this page, but can start for Ceylon, or any other place, within half an hour. I have no idea of doing anything of the sort, but I imagine if I were married and the thought occurred to me, I would at once be conscious of the ball and chain, and a sense of captivity. I should no longer be my genial and jovial self, but a disappointment to one woman rather than a thing of joy to a great many. I finally came to the conclusion that it would be the quintessence of selfishness for me to marry, and much as I admire selfishness, on the theory that one ad-

mires that which he is unable to be, I shall never commit matrimony.

I have been accused of advocating free love, but I have never advocated anything. It is provincial to advocate. A man of the world might do it, but it would never occur to a man of the universe; still I cannot imagine love without freedom, and I should not desire freedom without love.

I never proposed marriage but once in my life, and then it was in verse and through a third person. Like all people who idealize boldness, I am as timid as a squirrel.

The object of my tender passion was at the time seated on the lawn at a fashionable resort, engaged in the profitable occupation of watching a game of lawn tennis, and I, moved by some sudden and uncontrollable impulse, indited the following, and handing it to a woman friend of mature years and ripe judgment, requested that she act as a sort of minister plenipotentiary for me:

"Be you a friend of mine,
And wish to serve
Me, where I lack the nerve,
Then hie you to
Yon grassy green,
Where sits a woman—
You will know her
By her gracious mien
And by those deep gray pools
She calls her eyes.
But mark you well
That in them something lies,
And mortal man
Had best not gaze too long,
Or he will lose his soul
Ere he knows aught is wrong.
Delay not, friend, nor wait,
For ere the moon
Sheds her pale light once more,
I'd know my fate.
And if
To outer darkness I am cast
I'll not complain,
But to sweet Nature will I turn
And let God's rain
Cool my burning soul, and then
Take up life's load
And on my lonely way again."

The very jerkiness of the verse proves its sincerity. In fact it is a work of art, revealing the emotions of a man in my fix, but I was surprised later to be told by the young lady with withering scorn that I "wasted my life and fooled away my time." I was given the impression that she considered me no more than a court jester or an amiable idiot. Stung by the animadversions I again resorted

to verse, which is the recourse of the "stung," and produced the following, which I forwarded to her, and concluded the affair:

"So you, who've barely tasted life,
Tell me that mine's a wasted life—

Tu m'amuses.

To dress and tea and bridge and flirt
And count with glee the men you've hurt,

If that's to win, I'd rather lose.

I've loved and dreamed and worked and fought,
Done other things I hadn't ought;

I even like good booze.

But then you see, I'm just a man
Whose living life the best he can,

I've really no excuse.

And that's the reason I sought you
That you might tell me what to do,
That I might be some use—like you.

N'est ce pas?

Now that it is all over, I suppose it will not be ungallant for me to say that I am glad it turned out as it did. It seems to me, on mature thought, that perhaps one should not agree to bind himself for life "for better or worse." If it isn't for better, there is really very little excuse for going to so much trouble. Still that is only my own opinion, and on that account entitled to no respect. Those who like marriage no doubt praise it very highly, and even those who do not like it never fail to recommend it for others. As an institution for others there is nothing to compare with it. See the old ladies, how anxious and solicitous they are that no one shall escape matrimony.

I should imagine that the finest sport could be had by a young man of some pulchritude and more money, in evading matrimony. Every known device, and new and hitherto unknown ones, will be employed to trap him. It is the world against his wits. When he is young (I imagine) the trap is baited with Sunday night suppers, and domesticity, and invitations to "affairs"; these failing, a touch of Bohemianism is added, i.e., the bait is permitted to emerge from the trap for an instant and then dart back again. If the young man, in his excitement, should follow the bait into the trap, all well and good, and he is settled for the rest of his life. But should he catch the bait on the outside of the trap, ah, that is different. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth (I imagine), and his "sense of honor" will be appealed to, and then his emotions will be worked upon, and these producing no effect, the "mailed fist" will be shown him; and he still declining to capitulate, the law will be brought into the matter. If he still has the courage of his convictions, he may escape by a compromise settlement. I have an absurd and impracticable idea that if the two parties most concerned were let alone to work out their own destiny all this would not be; but then I have always been visionary.

I would really like to be married, if I could find an affectionate, reasonably good looking woman, with some common sense, who

would have me, but sometimes I think to find all those qualities, one must commit bigamy. I would, no doubt, be far more comfortable married, but one must stick to one's principles.

I do not think I should care to marry a rich woman. I imagine about the third time she said "my" automobile or "my" house, I would be out in search of a position as a chauffeur; but as my friend, the bartender at Sullivan's, has observed, "If you're going to marry at all, marry a rich one, because you're not going to get along with either." But he, of course, is a cynic.

My views about marriage are undoubtedly peculiar; I do not seem to take into account the numberless young girls who have been trained with no other idea than that of matrimony, and who are of "good family" and "accomplished." I do not. I cannot help it; I am not interested. I vastly prefer to give a two-dollar dinner to a girl that isn't used to any, rather than a twenty-dollar dinner to a girl who is used to the twenty-two-dollar kind. And yet I am not prejudiced, for occasionally I like to give a twenty-four-dollar affair to a girl that is tired of the eighteen-dollar variety. It is all a matter of taste.

The foregoing may or may not be pertinent to what is to follow. I will include it and a great deal more that is to come and which is of doubtful relevancy, because I am in a quandary. I am confronted with a problem on which I have expended much thought, with no other result than to come to a conclusion from a priori reasoning, that may be entirely false, and I desire the reader's aid in disentangling the puzzle; therefore I wish to place all the facts that could have the slightest bearing on the enigma at his disposal.



CHAPTER IV.

It will be seen from what I have written that I am not religious (although I have always found time to write Christ out in full instead of making an X to designate His name), that I have not that exalted respect for business success that is more or less the rule, that I am not industrious like the little busy bee, that I am not a celibate and yet have no great reverence for the institution of marriage, based, as it is in modern society, on money only.

Broadly speaking those are the things that I am not. On the other hand I do care for women, children, books, good conversation and the society of men of brains, which is unusual in the middle west, if not positively immoral.

I believe in the human soul, in a great poetic justice, and in this life and in no other. I believe in living as intensely, as intelligently and as completely as possible, and I believe that there is no sin save to deliberately add suffering to a world already overflowing with it, and I believe, further, that that sin is never committed, because if suffering is added, it is done through stupidity, and not with intention. I believe that all crime is misunderstanding—limited vision—but not such stupid misunderstanding—such limited vision, as the punishment inflicted for it by the "Holier than thou." The idea that there is "good" and "evil" is blasphemous and is a condemnation of life.

I hold many other eccentric and peculiar beliefs. For instance, should a highwayman demand my money, and I had none I should go and get some for him, if I had to borrow it, and in addition I'd find him a job, if he'd let me, as being a more effective method than punishment. I have no desire to join the pack in hunting the outcast—I have no passion for personal revenge.

I believe that if the North Pole was discovered at all Dr. Cook was the first man there. I believe that because the evidence to support Cook is just as credible as the evidence to support Peary's claim, and then psychology creeps in. If I had reached the Pole after years of struggle and found that someone had been there ahead of me, I should probably, in my first fierce disappointment, have cursed and raved, as Peary did. If I had actually arrived there first, after much privation and suffering, and then been disbelieved and discredited, ridiculed and charged with avarice, I should have conducted myself exactly as Cook did. I should have given the world my story with a feeling of melancholy compassion for humanity, provided I had no sense of humor, and gone into seclusion. Inasmuch as I know of no one else who believes in Cook, this view is bound to be regarded as peculiar, but to not be peculiar is to be mediocre.

The only person outside of myself who has ever expended any energy in an attempt to find out what I am is a certain poet, who made the following poetical, psychological analysis:

"You catch the gleam of the suspended knife,
You feel long fingers 'round your aching throat,
You hear a voice that dies upon the note
Of the wild waste and weariness of life.
The flowers you gather grow above a grave
Where your dead self these many years lies deep—
Aye where your dead self lies, but does not sleep:
You are so tired, and yet you are so brave.
And I who love the faintest touch of hands
Held toward me in caressing friendliness,
Wonder, my friend, you sometimes dare to smile,
When there is scarcely one who understands
The shy, sweet moods that torture and that bless
Your spirit groping like a lost exile."

Now I object to that line about being "tired and brave." I was born tired, but I am not brave. The balance of the poem I think is good psychology. I do think there is an unnecessary amount of waste and weariness in life and that it could be made better, and so far as personal ambition is concerned, I do gather flowers, to speak poetically, over my own grave, but that I should ever dare to smile? I wonder that I ever stop laughing.

I am not brave, though. There is no doubt about that. I feel sure if war broke out I should lack the physical courage to enlist. In fact, I think I would have the moral courage to stay home even though I were the only one. I am reminded of a story. Pardon me a second: Jake Rosenthal and Morris Cohn were traveling north in Arkansas over the Iron Mountain railroad. "Here," said Jake, as they crossed the Red river, "is where I enlisted in the Southern army." "Oh," said Morris, in great surprise, "I thought you was drafted in Missouri, Jake."

Courage is a very peculiar thing. It comes and goes. Beer-bohm Tree tells a story about a mouse that went into the cellar and discovered a pool of whiskey on the floor that had leaked from a cask. The mouse put his front leg into the whiskey and then sat up and licked it off; then he put his other leg into it and licked it off, and then he turned around and swished his tail about in it and licked it off, and then he hopped up the stairs, and seating himself at the top wanted to know in a loud tone of voice what had become of "that damn cat" that was looking for him yesterday. (A new story when I wrote it, but old now—how fast life goes!)

No—I think it was taking advantage of poetic license in calling me brave.

I really cannot be very brave, because brave men all use violent and heroic language: "Stick to the ship," and "Don't fire until you see the whites of their eyes," and "You may fire, Gridley, whenever you are ready."

However, I have been known to use violent and obscene language under severe provocation—such as an English witticism—but, as a rule, I am a mild-mannered person. Still I agree with Victor Hugo that General Cambronne was the greatest man at Waterloo.

Come to think of it, however, I recall another person who tried his hand at analyzing me in a short sketch. It was Alexander Harvey—America's Maupassant—who once summed me up in a letter to a friend, as follows:

"Turner has been in to see me. He is a perfect spirit, though spoiled by some mysterious touch of a leering lip. He is a chalice—a golden chalice—from which the sparkling wine is sipped by the Lucifers, rather than the Gabriels; and what the Gabriels have missed. Not that Turner cares—quite the contrary. That is the tragedy to me."

What a marvelous thing is Injustice—out of Envy by Jealousy, as we would have said on the race track. Injustice seems to destroy my theory of human society, for it is an aristocrat, born of two proletarians. Injustice, the great stimulant and strengthener, the *raison d'être* of the stronger man—and of such poor antecedents! Truly this thought makes existence appear as a circle. What would strong, giving, over-flowing, artistic natures do were it not for Injustice? They would perhaps perish of boredom.

Except for Injustice, how could I, in decent taste, have quoted Harvey? Except for Injustice, how could I, in decent taste, have mentioned the Country Club in print? Thanks to Injustice, I am enabled to write this book and advertise Harvey, The Country Club and myself. Never let me hear it run down again. Like a real Christian, I returned good for evil—the Club tried to make me infamous and I made it famous. Injustice born of Envy and Jealousy is the parent of Justice, eye of Good Taste, which is Justice's *nom de plume*—but I am getting ahead of my story.

I am not much concerned with happiness or unhappiness. No man is happy save when fighting and no one will fight with me any more, except John Barleycorn, and while I can best him during the early part of the battle, he always wins in the end.

I have no desire to be rich. I quite realize that in making that statement here in America, I furnish evidence to my enemies which they may be able to use to keep me there, when I am finally incarcerated in an institution for the harmless insane. Nothing could tempt me to be either rich or poor, but if a choice were unavoidable I would prefer to be poor, because life is so simple then; all there is to do is make money, which is easy—provided one has nothing else to do and no sense of true value. But if one is rich, life is complicated, intricate, puzzling. One never knows whether he, his jokes, or his money are being laughed at. There is no known method by which a rich man can tell whether he is a bore or a great

wit. There is no known method by which a rich man can test his friends or his wife.

The disadvantages of conspicuous wealth, under a Christian Democracy, are greater than its advantages. In a Democracy the general aim is to be safe. What other aim could there be? Great wealth buys nothing but notoriety and the hatred of the crowd, that is to say, the powerful (under Democracy); thus money buys not safety, but danger.

I have been with the rich on their yachts and have seen them send letters and telegrams in a vain effort to "make up a party." No one, who is of any importance, has time to go yachting with the rich. There are too many interesting things in life. The conspicuously rich do not hold themselves aloof because they want to. They are the real outcasts. One should not become conspicuous by the possession of things outside of oneself. It is inartistic.

A great many things merely amuse me that most people regard as of vital importance. The preachers of "morality," for instance. I think there is nothing quite so ridiculous as seeing a man standing up on his hind legs, waving his arms about and haranguing an instinct. It is as ridiculous to lecture a young man on "morality" as it would be to caution an old one against "immorality." After all there is only one humorist. Her name is Madame Nature.

I claim for myself but one virtue; I have never given anyone advice (when I seem to be giving it, I am only talking to myself), and yet I have received millions of dollars' worth of it, but it must be remembered that advice is like money—those who are freest with it can least afford to be.



CHAPTER V.

One cold, rainy evening, after dining at home, I received a telephone message. It was from "Her" and said "Not tonight," and so, to pass the time, I played solitaire for a little while, and then tried to read, but I could not become interested. At last I took a pencil and began to scribble aimlessly; and almost before I was aware of it, I found that I was analyzing my own mood on paper. The result of my scribbling was a sort of essay. The next morning I put it in my pocket, and meeting the editor of the *St. Louis Mirror*, gave it to him. He called me up later in the day, and told me that it was "the best thing he had had in five years—the best thing since George Sylvester Viericks' 'Confessions of a Barbarian,'" It was printed the following week under the heading, "What Shall I Do?" and the pen name of "M. Evelyn Bradley." It attracted quite a lot of attention. Why it did, I am sure I do not know, for it was a simple statement of fact.

After that I tried my hand at other articles and short stories. They must have been very odd or very immoral or something, for they were reproduced in New York and San Francisco, and one, "The Pigmy," was translated into French by some admiring Frenchman, and appeared in Paris. I began to wonder if I really had a literary gift. I have always thought it the greatest natural gift that one can have—the gift of another world—to be born again, so to say—but I did not, though, feel elated at the possibility of it; instead I felt a sense of responsibility. I felt as if I had been caught, like everyone else is sooner or later, in the soft asphalt of life. Henceforth, I would be chained to an occupation. I was no longer free. I had been caught and labeled, and yet underneath it all, I felt grateful for the knowledge of the gift, which is the psychology of all gifts. It was an automatic answer to "What Shall I Do?"

While I have seen enough evidence to convince me that I have some sort of literary talent, I have no discrimination about my own work. I am entirely incapable of deciding for myself what is good and what is utterly worthless, in the opinion of others. Some of my real masterpieces, in my own judgment, were rejected by the editor of the *Mirror*, and never got into print at all, and his standing as a critic of literature is unquestioned wherever the meaning of the word is understood and he is known. Why anyone, for instance, should have taken the trouble to translate "The Pigmy," or I should have had the nerve to write it, is beyond me, but as I grow older, I find more and more things beyond me, instead of less and less, as I thought it would be. Life, if one is going straight, is a continually widening horizon, a succession of disappearing mirages in the desert.

That I may shed all the light possible on my own character, as having some bearing on the solving of the mystery which I will come to later, I wish to say that my favorite poet is William Shakespeare, although I think the *Ballad of Reading Gaol* is the finest English poem. I am very fond of Swinburne, too. His *Hertha* I think a big thing, but it is a poem for poets. It is without meaning to the unpoetical temperament. But the *Ballad of Reading Gaol* is not only a tremendous poem, it has had, and is having, an unconscious effect on the attitude of the public mind toward the victim of its idealism, the scape-goat of its economic system and its false morality—the convict—without whom a Rockefeller or a priest would be an impossibility, and vice versa.

I have no choice of prose writers. I have fads with regard to them. At one time, I was even consumed with enthusiasm for Balzac, although, in justice to myself, I must say that I have never been guilty of any inclination toward Eugene Sue. I wonder, though, after all, if Flaubert's "*Madame Bovary*" is not, in the realm of novels, the only finished work of art.

I loathe filth in conversation or in literature, and yet I adore Rabelais. I love his esprit, his sparkling wit, his splendid sympathetic nature and his hatred of shams. When he handles filth it becomes funny, and only hypocrisy becomes filthy. He analyzes filth, and while he seems to enjoy his task a bit too much, he leaves his reader with the impression that there is nothing really filthy save a hypocrite. Forty years in a monastery convinced him of this fact in psychology.

Of all the men of all times, not excepting Shakespeare, I should rather have known Dr. Rabelais. I like him because the only things in the world I hate are eroticism and hypocrisy (and this is not what Turgeneff calls a "reversed platitude"). I like Maupassant for the same reason, and by the same token I despise the modern American magazine with its stories of tawdry sentimentalism, thinly disguising a nasty obsession with sex, and sex only becomes nasty when it becomes an obsession.

With philosophers, criticism is impotent, and valuations are useless. One should approach philosophy in an open, free receptive state of feeling, and then note the effect of his reading on his frame of mind.

Now Hartmann, Schopenhauer and Spinoza affect me unpleasantly. Schopenhauer with his theory that the "Sum total of pain in the world is greater than the sum total of pleasure," would depress me to the point of self-destruction, did he not follow up his statement with an example, i. e.: "When the hawk swallows the sparrow, his pleasure is not as great as is the sparrow's pain," hence, "The sum total of pain in the world is greater than the sum total of pleasure." So if, let us say, life is sixty per cent pain and forty per cent pleasure, which Schopenhauer would probably agree was fair, then has not the hawk done the sparrow a good turn, and is not the hawk who must continue to live the greater sufferer, and if so, why talk about

the pain of the sparrow, I ask? I do not dispute Mr. Schopenhauer's original statement—no one can, for it is merely speculation—I only maintain that his own example rather disproves it than the reverse, and yet he is a great prophet. He is the protagonist of nihilism, which must precede optimism.

And Hartmann, with his theory that man is a mistake of Nature's and who committed suicide at thirty-two, bores me. These Germans needed a week at Baden-Baden.

But even Shakespeare got quite sad at times: "Blow, blow, thy wintry wind, thou art not so unkind as man's ingratitude." These lines are neurotic. What does one want with gratitude? Is not that a form of compensation? As some healthy cynic has observed, "Gratitude is a lively appreciation of favors to come," and besides there is something fine and stimulating about a "wintry wind."

Socrates is fascinating in his method of reasoning, but I think he was a degenerate. There was no occasion for his drinking the hemlock. He could easily have escaped, but it was more dramatic to do it, and there is always something stagey about Socrates, as he is reported to us. It seems to me I catch a faint whiff of Oscar Wilde when I read of him.

Emerson is soothing; almost soporific. He is like a summer breeze blowing over one. Very pleasant, but not good for me. I need something more stimulating. However, his "Law of Compensation" is among the very greatest contributions to the philosophic world.

I think nothing of Wilde's hot house philosophy, as applied to me, and yet I think he was the greatest philosopher of them all, for when all is said and done, the test of your philosophy, is whether or not it serves you; and his served him, after he had owned the world and lost it through his own silly bravado. He didn't drink hemlock, and a philosophy that sustains one under circumstances such as he experienced, is not to be too lightly brushed aside. Still, I suppose philosophy is like intellect, you never acquire it until you need it, which perhaps accounts for the fact that pretty women are seldom brilliant.

I cannot stand the optimistic philosophers. I cannot see that anything can come from deliberate optimism but evil. How could it be otherwise? If one makes himself believe that a good is going to happen, he has anticipated the pleasurable sensation, and nothing but a disappointment can occur. One may grow impatient with the pessimistic philosophers, but the conscious optimist is disgusting—Elbert Hubbard, for instance. One should resist optimism—if he would be optimistic.

When I read Nietzsche, I feel as if some one had opened a window and let in fresh, mountain air. I feel stimulated, as if being a man amounted to something. He gives me a sense of power, of desire to achieve, to really achieve, viz.: to do something that has not been done a million times before; to be a successful idler (i. e., to be subjective when everyone else is objective), for instance, which is the most difficult thing in

the world. He makes me ashamed of a miserable ease and of remorse for so-called sins and mistakes. He is not soothing like Emerson, depressing like the pessimists, disgusting like the optimists, cloying like Wilde, or patronizing like Plato. I think Nietzsche must be my philosopher.

I know nothing of the technique of music. My opera is *Madame Butterfly*, which statement no doubt renders the opening sentence in this paragraph superfluous, in the opinion of musicians. But the music of *Butterfly* expresses to me a passionate soulfulness, an elusive sensation of exquisite pain and pleasure blended, that I have found nothing like anywhere else. I think Puccini has caught the cry of a woman's soul in anguish, and held it for a second, in a strange, heart-rending harmony.

CHAPTER VI.

As for my sins of omission and commission which might have bearing on the mystery that inspired these writings, I have never been connected with any public scandal (which, perhaps, only indicates that I have friends on the newspapers), no one is the worse off financially on account of my having been in the world—though the opposite of that is not quite true; I have never persuaded a lady to a "life of shame"—although I have induced at least one to forsake it (which was to accept a responsibility). I can, at the moment, recall no other sins of omission.

On the other hand, I have been arrested some twenty-odd times for offenses against the peace and dignity of the State, connected with automobiling. I have spent on that account much of my youth in police courts, and I have never seen a judge sentence a "criminal" that I did not feel that I would rather be the "criminal" than the judge. Still I feel no animus towards judges—just a sort of depression with regard to them. There is something heart breaking in witnessing, morning after morning, one of these poor, stupid manufacturers of misery in a world where misery is the only thing that there is too much of, sitting there in selfrighteousness and meting out revenge to this poor devil and that one, just as though he were God and these people had asked to be brought into his world. If the police judges were psychologists—they would sentence themselves to life imprisonment.

I have gotten hilariously drunk on occasions, which I sometimes regretted and sometimes not. I have come to no decision with regard to alcohol. Whether I am better or worse than other men, I do not know. Perhaps curiosity on that score is in part the motive for this abbreviated memoir, for it is clear that I must be different, else why the letter that follows a bit further on?

The foregoing is the best word picture of myself of which I am capable. If it has failed to convey a clear impression it is not through insincerity, but because I lack the power. I have shown how I felt toward things in general, my opinions on weighty matters and how I arrived at them; in fact, I have revealed my innermost soul. Whether I had a right to be surprised or not upon receipt of the following letter is for the reader to decide:

ST. LOUIS COUNTRY CLUB.

June 6, 1911.

Mr. Harry S. Turner,
Saint Louis, Mo.

Dear Sir:

At a meeting of the Board of Governors of the New Saint Louis Country Club, it was unanimously resolved that your resignation as an active member of the Club be requested, which is accordingly done.

Yours truly,
(Signed) Oliver S. Richards,
Acting Secretary.



CHAPTER VII.

Naturally, upon receipt of the foregoing communication, there was but one course for a gentleman to pursue. I immediately set about stuffing up the key holes, putting towels about the door and window openings, etc. Having gotten everything shipshape and air-tight, I sat down and wrote a few farewell notes—real masterpieces in their line. I read them over several times. They were very sad, and I was quite proud of them. I almost regretted that I should not be alive to see them in print. Suddenly, however, one of those strange whims of mine overtook me, and it occurred to me that it was inartistic and undramatic to write farewell notes, so I tore them up. I argued the matter this wise: If one is to one's "own quietus make," it should be a wordless play. To write notes is like explaining the point of a joke; it is unpardonable. Still the temptation to have one's say when there is no possibility of contradiction is strong—one feels like a Judge on the bench or the editor of a weekly paper—and it required no little moral courage for me to bring myself to destroying those epistles. However, I reflected, if one has been denied the grace to live as a member of the Country Club—if one has been unclubby in his life—it is no reason why he should not die irreproachably, which thought removed some of the sting.

My next move was to select a suit of pajamas that had been given me as a combination Christmas and birthday present. They were of China silk and had forest scenery embroidered on them by loving hands. I could not help remarking, as I inadvertently caught a glimpse of myself in the mirror, that I looked rather well. For a fleeting second I had some regrets about dying, but then the awful alternative loomed up before me, and I went on with the preparations. I was calm and cold as ice now. Deliberately and with a steady hand, I turned full on each one of the four gas jets, switched off the electric light and went to bed. For a time I was undecided as to the most becoming attitude in which to die. First I put my hands under my head, but it occurred to me that the effect would appear studied, so finally I decided to fold them across my breast in the simplest and most conventional way. (For once I would be conventional.) Then, there being nothing further to do, I waited for Death. I admit, now, that I did not even then give up all hope of a reprieve in the shape of a letter from the Board of Directors, saying that it was all a mistake. But it did not come, and so I died.

The next thing I knew the sun seemed to be shining in my face. I was sure it was Heaven; still, as I looked about me the scene seemed familiar. At last it dawned on me that I was at home, and that it was afternoon and the western sun was shining

in through the cracks between the shades and the window ledges. I was perplexed and disappointed. I arose and examined the gas jets. They were turned full on, but there was not the slightest odor of gas issuing from them. I felt like a man who has been cheated. Slowly it came over me what had happened. I had not paid the gas bill. Strange as it may seem to members of the Country Club and others in the higher social circles, I was glad to find that I was alive, but what pleased me most was the discovery that it is not only a wrong thing to do to pay one's gas bill, but that it is a careless and a dangerous thing as well. But, I reflected, inasmuch as Fate has intervened at the last moment and saved my life, I shall not tempt the trickster, by making another attempt on myself. Instead of that I dressed myself and went to my only remaining club, The Racquet, where I held forth with some old cronies till well into the night, repeatedly crooking the elbow, and freely jesting upon one subject or another, for hath not the immortal William of Avon said:

"With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come,
And let my liver rather heat with wine
Than my heart cool with mortifying gloom."

The next morning I awakened, as is usual with me, in an entirely different mood. All desire for a pathetic ending had passed, and I felt almost as well as people who have never belonged to the Country Club. Instead of a feeling of sadness, I found that I was possessed with a driving curiosity. I determined, before taking any other steps, to find out, if possible, why the Board had singled me out for their attention. It occurred to me that perhaps it was just a trick to secure my autograph, but I dismissed that, for I recalled the fact that it could be got off the bar checks with less trouble. Of course, I had violated every rule of the Club, except that one against tipping the servants; which thought suggested that perhaps all of the members had received a letter like mine. So I called up two of them on the telephone, but they said they had not received anything in the way of a communication from the Country Club (except the usual notice that they were posted), and, as the afternoon paper contained no account of wholesale suicides of our best people, I was forced to the conclusion that I alone had been honored by the Board. While I appreciated the saving of several hundred a year, not to mention numerous articles of wearing apparel, that annually disappeared from one's lockers, I was still curious to determine why the said honor was thrust upon me, entirely unsolicited as it was.

And so, in a proper spirit of humility, as is befitting when addressing so important and serious a body, I wrote the following letter to the Board:

H. S. TURNER,
St. Louis.

Board of Governors,
Country Club.
Dear Sirs:

When I received your letter I was at first bewildered.

That I am stabbed in the dark from behind, not by one man, but by a set of men, whose plain duty it was to protect me with their advice if they thought it necessary, rather than to seek to undermine me, is not of the greatest importance. It might happen to anyone. But my reason says insistently, "Why?"

I do not know of whom the Board is composed, nor do I wish to know. I admit that I was hit, but I was not hit fair.

I suppose when you gentlemen find out you have done me an injustice you will apologize.

In the meantime, I shall try to get along without the Country Club.

Yours respectfully,

(Signed) H. S. Turner.

CHAPTER VIII.

After waiting several days and receiving no answer, to the letter in the preceding chapter, I hid me to the office of one Benjamin Gratz, the President of the said New Saint Louis Country Club (although he has other business), and after waiting some little time was ushered into his presence. Mr. Gratz is a short, peculiar-looking man (but I forget—this is not an interview). To make a long story short, I asked him point blank why the Board had written me their interesting communication. "No," he said, "I cannot explain."

"Will you tell me," I asked, "who furnished you with the information on which you acted?"

"No one," he said in a sepulchral voice, and with his head dropped on his chest, in what struck me as a Napoleonic attitude, and then he added, as he eyed me sharply, "We acted on our own initiative."

"I do not know of whom the Board is composed," I replied, "But you evidently voted against me, although you had never met me."

Mr. Gratz nodded, and I could not help observing again how like Napoleon he was. Now I do not admire Napoleon's attitude toward life, nor a single one of his acts—not even his treatment of Josephine—but he has made some excellent epigrams.

"Mr. Gratz," I said, "was any charge made against me?"

"I cannot answer that," he said, and then he sat low in his chair and gazed at me steadily, and I thought mysteriously. It was not quite clear to me why he couldn't answer my question, but I had

no desire to press the subject and make myself unpopular, so after the silence had become oppressive, I said:

"Well?"

He began to chant in a sort of monotone: "The women of the Country Club must be protected. The women of the Country Club must be protected," etc., etc.

"Yes, yes," I said, eagerly, "go on."

But he only repeated again, "The women of the Country Club must be protected."

Now, while I considered that statement open to argument, I had no desire to discuss it with him at the time, as I could not see that it had anything to do with the subject of our conversation, but it was all I could get him to say, until just as I was leaving he put his hand on my shoulder, in a most fatherly manner, and announced, I thought with a tinge of pathos in his voice, "You could be a success if you tried."

"The women of the Country Club must be protected." It dawned on me after I got outside what he meant. Don Quixote Gratz will now buckle on his armor, adjust his helmet, take up his reliable spear, mount the faithful Rosinante, and fare forth in search of ladies to protect from the blandishments of that bold and wicked knight, Sir Harold of Normandy.

And his other remark, "You could be a success if you tried." That statement set me to wondering what success was; I pondered over it all the way home. I thought of a man who had been my intimate friend for years. He had no money at all until he was past thirty, and then he came into an enormous fortune. We were at school together, where we both spent our time, I am afraid, to not the best advantage. He was as handsome a man as one could wish to see; over six feet tall and beautifully made, and in addition he was the possessor of a pretty wit and a fine heart, and as a companion was incomparable. He never made even a bluff at work. His inheritance changed neither his friends nor his disposition, and if ever money was put to a good use, his was. He never replied to a "touch" verbally. He allowed his money to do the talking. He died at thirty-four, and I have never ceased to miss him, but was he a "Success"?

Then I thought of another young man of immense inherited wealth, now in his thirties. He is personally pulchritudinous and of fine physique, but unfortunately, lacking in imagination. With all this power in his hands—youth, health, good looks and money—he is a park commissioner at a salary of some two or three thousand a year from the commonwealth (which is really taken out of the pocket of some more efficient man, who really needs it), and he spends his time looking after roadways and grass plots and sprinkling carts. No doubt he is a "success" in most people's eyes, but to me it seems a life wasted. He always reminds me of John Galsworthy's careful man who was forever trying to make an omelet without breaking any eggs, and while he clearly made no omelets, on the other hand he had no broken eggs. How can a man with the power of a god and the soul of a gardener be called a "Success"? I gave it up.

Again, I remembered another man of somewhat obscure ancestry, of no means, and who began his career as a newspaper reporter. Alone and worse than unaided (for he was combated by powerful forces at every turn), he has painfully, patiently and with rare good judgment made a name for himself that is known wherever English literature penetrates. But that, in my opinion, is not the greatest of his achievements, for he has given a helping hand to more than one desperate girl and been instrumental in getting more than one poor down-and-out fellow from the work-house or the penitentiary, and giving him a chance for life. Also he has discovered and made through his encouragement and advice many a writer who would otherwise have been unheard of. All the while that he was doing these things he was engaged in editing the most remarkable weekly paper in the whole world, and one that has never side-stepped the truth for fear of losing an advertiser, which alone should place him among the immortals. Also he is a delightful conversationalist, with a peculiar, grim sense of humor.

But is he a "Success"? I don't think he is, though by some standards he is perhaps more of a success than either of the other two examples, for he has been as true to himself as he could be, which isn't very true, in that he is by nature a perpetual disharmony, torn between his heart and his reason. He seems never to be able to co-ordinate them, and so his life is one long series of contradictions. He reminds me of one of those oscillating electric fans, which moves slowly from one extreme to the other, but nevertheless is always whirling merrily and stirring up a bit of breeze, which is something, even if it doesn't blow the hair off one's head. He never hits the mark, this editor, although he crosses it, going in one direction or the other, a thousand times in the course of a year. He is the sort of man who desires everything, but who cannot hold his mood or concentrate long enough to grab what he wants. I am always reminded, when I am with him, of the character in Victoria Cross' book, who stood in front of Life's shop window, seeing everything, but unable to decide on any one thing, which it is quite necessary to do in Life's shop, unless one has everything, or unless one would pass on empty-handed. It is useless to endeavor to deceive oneself into believing that one has everything by calling oneself a philosopher, when the fact is, that in reality, one only lacks the courage of one's desires.

His contempt for everything outside of himself proves his hopelessness plebeianism; even his erudition crumbles somewhat when you touch it. He has waded too much in romanticism, i. e., slush, and he has too strong a predilection for digging in manure piles and deceiving even himself into the belief that he is searching for rare flowers. In short, he has been spoiled by sacerdotalism, which fills him with the egotism of beneficence, but we are "on to" beneficence these days. The priest has overworked it in his efforts to overpower us. This type always becomes prominent in decadent periods, as at present, for this type is the protagonist of decadence.

I do not think I have ever seen a successful man or even read of one. Oscar Wilde might have been but for his fatal weakness, for he had the dual mind, i. e., the balanced mind, that comprehends all sides of a question simultaneously, such a mind as Shakespeare invested Hamlet with, only of finer quality, in that it leaned toward humor rather than toward melancholy, though the dividing line between the two is made of very fine hair. Wilde's mind did not oscillate. His was the intellect of the superhumorist—Homeric-like, almost God-like. How ironical that a body should have betrayed that giant intellect, and what becomes of the "mind-over-matter" theory? Had Wilde's body been a match for his mentality, I should have called him a successful man. He was one, in his own opinion, for *De Profundis* is an insincerity; but brilliancy, unaccompanied by physical strength, is only the "phosphorescent glimmer of rottenness," the dull glow of punk.

But wait a minute. How about Edward E. Paramore? Here is perhaps a successful man. Surely he possesses every material thing that one could wish for; he has in addition a fine spirit, irrepressible humor; physiologically he is exceptional and he is a true philosopher. His heart is so fine, that I have never seen him exhibit the slightest trace of sentiment. He is far too sentimental for that. When I consider how much he has lived, how much he has seen and how much he knows, and now, near the meridian of life, observe that he retains all of his pristine boyishness; when I reflect upon his utterly charming family, his delightful home life and yet on the other hand his companionable quality, the trace of the vagabond in him, his healthy, joyous cynicism, and on top of it, his perfect sense of values and his understanding of men in all the walks of life, in short his universality of spirit, I feel that perhaps I have been straining my eyes toward the distance, when what I sought, the successful man, was standing at my elbow. Paramore has a fine legal mind; also he has a knowledge of and instinct for finance that is superior to the knowledge and instinct of anyone of the professional financiers I have happened to know. In his facility of instantaneously finding a story to demonstrate a point, even Abraham Lincoln was not his equal. This quality enables him to accomplish his end without lacerating the feelings of his antagonist, and would have made of Paramore an unequalled diplomat, or, being as he is, a born narrator, as a novelist he would have added much to literature.

I cannot escape the conclusion that, judged by every true standard, Paramore is a superior man; and yet, perhaps, if I tested him or any other big man with "moralic acid," he would crumble into dust, from which I take it that "moralic acid" is the most subtle and dangerous of poisons.

If I am wrong, I cannot help it. It is an astigmatism in my eye, so bear with me. If I can not "see" an Anthony Comstock or a Gratz or the "advanced" literary crowd in New York, it is something, perhaps, lacking in me. However, if my view were not different, there would be no point in expressing it.

CHAPTER IX.

I am well aware of the triviality of the whole affair, regarded by itself. I am quite conscious of my own insignificance and that of the Country Club. I fully realize that compared to something important like "making money," the whole matter is not even a good joke. Our disagreement will, no doubt, appeal to the disinterested bystander; as in the case of the backwoodsman's wife who came into the clearing in front of her cabin and discovered her husband in a death struggle with a bear. In remarking on it afterwards, she said it was the only fight she ever saw where she didn't care who won.

There is, notwithstanding, a principle involved in this controversy which goes as deep as anything in human life. It is whether an individual shall have his reputation, his money or his life taken away by the herd without a chance to defend himself. It so happens that I can defend myself quite satisfactorily, because I have time to do it, and because I can write, and because I have a sense of the ridiculous, which is only a sense of proper proportion, which enables me to take an institution like the Country Club at its proper valuation. I know a number of young men belonging to that organization, however, who regard it so seriously that had they received the communication which I did, and been refused an explanation, would actually have done that which I played at doing in an earlier part of this story. One member of my family took the matter quite to heart, and I have never been able to convince her that I do not know why the Board of the Club saw fit to write me that letter. The other members of the family, however, regarded it as I do, viz.: a mystery of motive, but not a matter of life and death. I repeat that the principle involved is, or should be, a matter of interest to every man who believes in fair play, which none but losers apparently believe in, nowadays. I do not wish to give the impression that I am paraphrasing that ancient and false platitude of the overcharged customer: "I didn't care for the money—it was the principle of the thing." In my case it was quite the reverse. I was glad to save the money, but I couldn't get away from the principle of the thing.

The following facts are not inspired by a touch of "sour grapes." To those who may think so, I would say that the difference between seeing straight and crooked, is largely one of being able to determine which is cause and which is effect. The confusion of cause and effect is the most common of intellectual errors. For instance, we hear that a wife gets a divorce from her husband because he drinks, whereas the fact may be, and usually is, that the husband drinks because he cannot get a divorce from his wife. Drink is not the cause of

divorce. Inability to get a divorce is the cause of drink, very often. In my case it is possible—remotely possibly—that the reason I was asked to resign was on account of some references to the club's shortcomings. I do not now point out those shortcomings because I was asked to resign. I have no desire to do anything that would injure the Club or the members of the Board. I merely wish to relieve myself of the necessity of trying to solve a puzzling enigma, and, having tried every other imaginable method, I am forced to the one I am employing, viz.: to write the whole story, which, as I explained in the beginning, always relieves me. I am afraid if I didn't get this poison out of my system, I might, like the husband referred to, take to drink, whereupon the Board of Governors would say: "See, he drinks. We were right in requesting his resignation." No, I am not malicious nor vindictive in the premises. If I were, I should not confine myself to mere ethical criticism, but might be inclined to recite some club history, that would make this little book one of the season's best sellers.

The plain unadorned truth is that the St. Louis Country Club had become a disgrace to the City in its run down condition. The service in the cafe was slow and dirty and costly. The golf links were inferior, regarded from every standpoint, to any other course in the city. The locker rooms were indecent. Men were crowded together in a space three feet wide among ill-smelling clothing, and in a state of nudity that was disgusting. The stables and out buildings were dilapidated and the verandas about the club house were rotten and full of holes.

No doubt the Japanese servants presented quite a smart appearance, but they were woefully inefficient, and it always grated on my sensibilities, in old St. Louis, settled by my good forefathers, to see the bourgeoisie of yesterday become the pseudonymous aristocracy of today, and the old, self-respecting black servant superseded by the smirking, cringing, treacherous yellow man.

I hope these statements of fact will not be attributed to the fable of Aesop's to which I have already alluded. Of course, it is idle for me to deny that I will miss the melodious voices of the members issuing from the bar on Saturday evenings in various degrees of disharmony, as they warble the strains of "It's always fair weather when good fellows get together," or "I wonder who's kissing her now." And those thrilling dinner dances, where everyone gets up from the tables, jostle and jolt each other for ten minutes, and then get jammed in the doorway, as they all try to go home at once! I shall be lost without them.

And Genevieve, that Danish female impersonator, who has been a residing member of the club, sans dues, for lo these many years. Who will take his place?

Never again will I have the pleasure of seeing the Ben Greet players perform "As You Like It" on the lawn, by the light of the pale moon. Never again will I hear the dulcet tones of Rosalind in soliloquy, as she emerges from the Forest of Arden, the while

Ben Gratz' colored chauffeur is carving a chunk out of Mr. Stickney's coachman with a bowie knife on the front porch. As a wag remarked on that occasion of the Country Club's excursion into art: "It seems to me that Ben Greet isn't giving as good a show as Ben Gratz tonight."

But I maintain that comparisons are odious, and why be hypercritical? Where, save at the Country Club, could one see at a single performance a comedy by Shakespeare and a tragedy by Gratz, with a real negro in the part of the jealous Moor?

And who but the Board of Governors of the Country Club would have selected "As You Like It" to produce for the delectation of the members in their first and only artistic effort? "As You Like It"—Shakespeare laughing at his audience, giving them what they like, inasmuch as they were incapable of understanding his serious works—Shakespeare in cynical, satirical mood, saying "Here Fools, is something as you like it." What could have been more apropos, and what a pity the matchless poet could not have witnessed the performance? But his reputation as a deer stealer would have worked to prevent his becoming a member of the New Saint Louis Country Club. Still he might possibly have disguised himself as a stock broker, and thus entered upon the sacred domain.

How I shall miss those charming afternoons on the lawn, where the different feminine cliques distribute themselves at proper distances apart, and make disparaging remarks about each other, all the while each one wishing she were at home, lying on the bed in comfortable matinee with a cigarette and a novel.

And the ball team, which is only permitted by the Board to challenge teams that are its social equal! No more will I see it in soul-stirring struggle with the nine from the Wednesday Club.

Surely life is hard; still I might have borne up were it not for the realization that henceforth our society leader will perform on the flute, and I will not be there to hear the saccharine notes, unless perchance I should secrete myself beneath some friendly rose bush, nearby an open window.

Ah, it is very sad to have to give up so much, but then, "Life is not all beer and skittles."



CHAPTER X.

Having received numerous messages by grapevine and telephone to the effect that the news of the request for my resignation was being diligently circulated, and as that was interesting to a psychologist as a matter of motive, I wrote the following letters:

H. S. TURNER.

St. Louis.

To the Board of Governors,
Country Club:

Dear Sirs:

Supplementing my previous letter, I learn today, from sources that are unquestionable, that the matter of my being asked to resign from your Club has been reported by a member of your Board, holding an honorary and confidential position, to a person or persons in no way connected with your Board. The matter is now public property through the instrumentality of this officer.

I do not deny your legal right to request my resignation, but I do deny your right to humiliate members of my family, who still have the bad taste not to think me undesirable. The humiliation of myself is another and separate matter.

I ask that you will, in one week, convene in special meeting and instruct your Secretary to withdraw his request for my resignation.

Assuring you of my highest respect, I am

Very sincerely,

6-12-11.

(Signed) H. S. Turner, Jr.

No answer was received—hence the following:

H. S. TURNER.

St. Louis.

To the Board of Governors:

I am entitled to reply to my letters to you under any conception of ethics.

This affair that you have started with me is clearly "unfinished business." As the matter stands now your Honorable Board is in the position of having struck in the dark and then run away. It is nothing less than (I have carefully weighed the word) cowardly.

Boards like yours are of course like juries, controlled by one individual with a strong incentive.

I am prepared to answer any charge, but of course I cannot answer no charge.

Yours truly,

(Signed) H. S. Turner, Jr.

June 27th, 1911.

These letters brought forth the following from the Board and my reply thereto. I suspect the attorney of the Board must have inspired this communication. Its lucidity of phrase, its wealth of idea, its simple directness, could have emanated from no other source.

ST. LOUIS COUNTRY CLUB.

July 1, 1911.

Mr. H. S. Turner, Jr.,
Saint Louis, Mo.

Dear Sir:

Answering your letter of 6-19:

The request of the Board for your resignation has never been complied with. Therefore it is impossible to give you any answer at this time.

Yours truly,

(Signed) H. H. Langenberg,

Secretary.

Dict.

H. S. TURNER, JR.
5023 Delmar Boulevard,
St. Louis.

To the Board of Governors,

Dear Sirs:

The very lucid letter of your new Secretary, signed with the typewriter, is received today. By careful analysis, with the aid of a lantern, I find that it is intended to mean that the reason you refuse to give the reason for requesting my resignation is, that I decline to resign without knowing what that reason is, and if I resign without knowing what it is, you seem to intimate that then perhaps, if you feel like it, you will announce it.

A very learned man, Mr. Amiel, has observed that "Action is but coarsened thought," and I have no desire to be coarse if it can be avoided, but you may rest assured I am going to have a reason for your action, if there is any possible way to get it. You have to your credit the destruction of a fine patrician youth of unusual quality. I refer to Dan Tracy. No one knows why you did it, but there are the most revolting and impossible stories in circulation, all of them different and all equally unbelievable—and all due to your action. I shall not suffer his fate even if I have to do so unethical a thing as to bring your Honorable Board out in the open.

The Country Club is not of the slightest interest to me, but psychology is. There could have been but one object in your action and that was to humiliate me, and there would be no humiliation unless the story was circulated, which you proceeded to do with promptness and thoroughness. To now leave the matter in this indefinite shape is Machivellian in its nastiness, but perhaps the final result may give a little tang to the otherwise dull Summer Season.

Yours most respectfully,

7-3-11.

(Signed) H. S. Turner, Jr.

There was a lull after this and I had time to reflect on the principle involved in this attack on me. When I realized the full meaning of that first letter; when I began to see the state of mind of a set of men who had accepted my money for some fifteen-odd years, and had maintained pleasant relations with me, and then without assigning a cause or without warning, had attempted to undermine me in a most wanton and cowardly manner, I was for the first time in my life afraid. I wondered if all my theories of life were wrong—if my idea that humanity was fine at bottom, but that it was handicapped by its own absurd laws, was simply error. And then I comforted myself with the thought, that I had always held that if one is looking for treachery he will not find it in the "Bottoms Gang" nor in "Egan's Rats," but in just such places as I had found it. And so my whole fabric did not crumble, as for a moment I thought it would. Instead it flashed over me that these men had done what they considered a clever thing. They had tried to stab me in the dark, and missed me. And I realized that I had a knife and a light in the shape of a typewriter and the gift of garrulity, and so, dear reader, do not take the balance of the correspondence in this volume too seriously. It is merely the cat playing with the mouse.

H. S. TURNER, JR.
St. Louis.

July 17, 1911.

To the Board of Governors,
Country Club, City.
Dear Sirs:

If you get as much amusement out of reading my letters as I get out of writing them, it is plain that I have added somewhat to the sum total of mirth in the world, and it is doubtful if any of you can say that you have done as much.

One of the most humorous situations in Robin Hood is where old Friar Tuck becomes incensed at Robin, over some trivial matter, and stamps and fumes and froths in his efforts to think of a suitable revenge. Finally he shouts out "I'll excommunicate you!"

It never fails to amuse the audience immensely. Excommunication of a greater person by a group of lesser ones always touches the risibilities. But even the Church, notoriously unfair in its petty spites, does not go so far as to excommunicate without first giving a reason.

It is trite and platitudinous, I know, but nevertheless an axiom that people living in glass houses should not throw stones. There may be some of your directors who are not living in glass houses, but, on the other hand, there are some who are living in isinglass houses, which a puff of wind will disastrously disarrange.

But seriously, Gentlemen, now that you see you have erred, would it not be a more courageous and a more common sense thing to do, to withdraw your childish letter to me, with proper apologies. In which event I might resign from your archaic institution, as I have no desire to contribute to its support under the

circumstances. In the future if we needs must fight, let us fight like gentlemen, according to the rules, and not like assassins and anonymous letter writers.

In case I resign, I shall even be willing to write you my resignation in verse, which you can no doubt sell, after my death, for as much as an initiation fee.

Most respectfully,
(Signed) H. S. Turner.

The following letter addressed to the Honorable Daniel G. Taylor, was sent the morning after the interview, or collision, or explosion or whatever one wishes to call it, which occurred at the Racquet Club upon my request of the said Taylor, in person, for an answer to my communications to the Board of the Country Club:

H. S. TURNER, JR.
5023 Delmar Boulevard.
St. Louis.

August 18, 1911.

D. G. Taylor, Esq.,
City.
Dear Dan:

You seemed to me unduly excited last evening, and consequently may not have gotten a clear understanding of my position in the Country Club matter, hence this note.

Your Board by its action has left me in a position where any enemy of mine may make any allegation he or she may see fit as to the causes behind your request for my resignation, and I am helpless. I have pleaded with you, appealed to your sense of right, offered myself for any investigation, in order that you may assign to me some reason for your peculiar action, even though it be so trivial as that I have brown eyes. But you decline to answer at all, except to remark as you did last evening, "Now you will get all that is coming to you." Have I ever asked for more or less? All I want is "All that is coming to me."

If there is no way that you can be appealed to as men, then I shall have to go after your pocketbooks, and I hereby bind myself to turn over to "charity" the amount of any judgment I may secure against you. less expenses. If I obtain no judgment at all, I shall have got what I want. viz.: a reason for your action. My life contains no secrets (and perhaps yours doesn't), and I cannot rest under the insinuation that it does.

Be assured that I shall use every weapon I can command to obtain for myself simple justice in this matter. No man worthy of the name could do otherwise.

Yours truly,
(Signed) Harry,

5023 Delmar Boulevard.

August 11, 1911.

D. G. Taylor, Esq.,
City.
Dear Sir:

Since writing you, it occurred to me why not have the Board of the Country Club write me a letter asking my resignation on the ground that I am *persona non grata* to a member of the Board, or of the Club. In the event they will do this I will resign from both the Country and Racquet Clubs, and forget it. There is no trick in this. I have no desire to do anything other than to be permitted to resign without implied disgrace. I have never consciously done anything to any member of the Country Club, and this vindictiveness is puzzling to me. I cannot see how any body of sensible men can expect me to tacitly admit that I am guilty of some outrageous thing that makes association possible with me no longer. To strike as they did without warning, after all these years of membership and pleasant relations, is incomprehensible to me. Even a rattlesnake warns before it strikes, but rattlesnakes are true to their instincts—men are not.

Will you advise me what you think of this and whether you will recommend it or not, so that I may know how to act. Surely this much is due me from you.

Yours truly,
(Signed) H. S. Turner, Jr.

Jesse McDonald.

Daniel Taylor.

McDONALD & TAYLOR.
Attorneys and Counselors at Law.
Third National Bank Building.
St. Louis.

August 22, 1911.

Dear Harry:

I have yours of the 19th inst., and have delayed writing because I have hardly known just what to say.

You probably do not realize that in each of your letters you insert some sentence that makes it a little bit difficult to answer you calmly. (Rather amusing, this.—H. S. T.)

I do not believe that I can succeed in getting the Board of the Country Club to comply with your request, to the effect that they stated that your resignation was requested on the ground that you were "*persona non grata* to a member of the Board or of the Club." I cannot speak for the Board, nor do I feel at liberty to make any statement with respect to their action. But I will, as soon as the Board convenes, present your request that they formulate some charge against you, or make a statement to you of their reasons for requesting your resignation.

The Board must decide as a body what it will do in the premises. I can neither speak for them nor decide this matter for them.

It is needless for me to say to you that there are many reasons why the existing situation is particularly distressing to me.

Yours truly,
(Signed) Dan.

Harry S. Turner, Jr., Esq.,
5023 Delmar Blvd.,
St. Louis, Mo.

The foregoing letter of the Honorable Taylor's I think contains the real comedy "hit" of the whole affair. I refer to the "You probably do not realize" which begins the second paragraph of his able letter. Note, gentle reader, that my "*persona non grata*" proposition had a string to it. Had it been agreed to, I should have asked in my usual urbane and mild manner for the gentleman's name, and thus the whole plot would have been revealed.

The following letter sounds as though I had written it after talking with Teddy Mallinckrodt. It is so serious and genuine.

H. S. TURNER, JR.
5023 Delmar Boulevard.
St. Louis.

Sept. 27th, 1911.

Board of Governors,
Country Club.

Dear Sirs:

I have waited patiently for several months thinking I would be given the courtesy of some explanation of your request for my resignation from your club.

I have felt from the first, and feel even more strongly now, that to resign from it is to be relieved of something that I have outgrown; but it did seem, after so many years of membership, during which I was never conscious of enmity, nor ill-feeling, and during which I had done my part as well as I knew how, that I was at least entitled to a reason for your act. You evidently do not see fit to give one, for the very simple reason that you have none, so that I am forced to arrive at a conclusion through my reasoning powers.

I, have examined myself fairly, as I would a third person held at arms length, and find nothing in my life, either in or out of the club, that could be the basis of this affair.

I have been active and successful in many occupations since my sixteenth year. I have always been on the side of culture—the broader view of life. My interests, outside of business, have had a trend toward literature, and I am the author, over a pen name, of philosophical articles and short sketches and stories in some magazines that have given rise to comment.

It had not occurred to me before I began thinking of a reason for your letter, to give myself much thought in these aspects; but a system of elimination brings me to this conclusion: that the matter is one of personal antagonism.

I have put the following questions to myself, and then have answered them to the best of my ability. If I have not answered them accurately then it is for you to set me straight.

Q. Is it because I am ill-bred?

A. No. Because no one in the city has a longer or more honorable lineage. All the living members of my family are creditable men and women.

Q. Is it because I am not honest in business matters?

A. 'Tis true I have not accumulated a great deal of money, but avarice has always been foreign to my nature. On the other hand, no man can say I have ever robbed or cheated him.

Q. Is it because I am personally repugnant to other members?

A. No, for I have been much sought after and have sought no one.

Q. Is it because I have been connected with a scandal?

A. The Club has many members who have been, but I have never been.

Q. Is it because I have violated any rule or law of the Club?

A. No. I may have done so, but I am unaware of it, and if I had, the Board would allege that as a reason for this letter.

Q. Is it because of my opinions?

A. No, for no one but myself knows what they are. I have created some fictional characters who have expressed opinions, but which are no more necessarily mine, than because an author creates a murderer, he is himself one; and besides, punishment for opinions is rather medieval.

Q. Is it because some individual in the Board has conceived a hatred of me—not for the qualities I lack, but for the qualities I have?

A. Yes. There is no other answer. There is an alchemy in hatred as there is in friendship, and there is no accounting for it. There was but one way that this person could make me conscious of his existence, and that was to attack me from behind, and from the ambush of a board of directors, as he has done.

I am fully aware that there is no real power behind the letter of the Board; that it resolves itself into merely an anonymous and gratuitous insult, and I could ignore it if I cared to, and nothing further would come of it.

But permit me to call your attention to one thing: A rule permitting you to write a letter of that sort, will in the end reduce your club to a very low standard. A man of delicacy and breeding will, of course, retire upon receipt of such a communication, but your thick-skinned individual will ignore it. In the end the vulgarian must triumph. He gets into the Board by asserting himself, and then tries to eliminate other members of better blood, brains and culture, in order to make himself comfortable.

You see, you must pardon me for speaking up for myself, but what can one do when he is being attacked from several sides, not for what he has done, but for what he is?

No, Gentlemen, your club has been used to vent a personal spite. So be it! Life is a road we are all traveling, and if one

stops to throw stones at every dog that barks at his heels, he is nowhere when evening comes.

Please accept my resignation, and let us call the incident closed. I do not to this day know who the directors are, with the exception of one, so that when we meet it will be they who are embarrassed and not I.

Yours truly,

(Signed) H. S. Turner.

Nothing more happened it seems until Mr. G. H. Walker got excited and wrote the following letter. G. H. stands for George Herbert, who if I mistake not, was a learned divine who wrote some theological works in England some centuries ago (I have no memory for dates—unless they are in the future). The present George Herbert's letter shows that he has profited by being named after so illustrious a man.

I append his communication, together with my poor reply, from which it will be observed that I do not believe in fighting the devil with fire—in fact that is the only thing he should not be fought with. It is giving him too great an advantage.

G. H. WALKER.

Saint Louis.

H. S. Turner, Jr., Esq.

October 6th, 1911.

Dear Sir:

Mr. Gratz informs me today that he has received from the secretary of the Country Club your resignation to the Club, and that you attribute the previous action of the Board to the influence of one of the directors who is your personal enemy. As I have heard from several sources since my return home, that I am the enemy referred to, I wish to say in justice to myself that I have had nothing to do with the matter. I was not present at the meeting at which the action was taken and had no knowledge that charges were to be preferred against you, nor that your name would come before the meeting in any manner whatsoever. Neither had I ever, to my recollection, discussed your name with any member of the Board, with the exception of Judge Taylor when a member of the Racquet Club Board and then regarding Racquet Club affairs. I am not seeking to avoid any responsibility and had I been "after you," as I am told you think. I would not have taken this method of trying to show it.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) G. H. Walker.

H. S. TURNER, JR.
5023 Delmar Boulevard.
St. Louis.

Mr. G. H. Walker.

St. Louis, Mo.

Oct. 7, 1911.

Dear Bert:

If others knew what I am thinking, they'd know as much as I do.

You ought to ask Gratz to show you that letter. The Club asks me to resign and assigns no reason. I metaphorically get on my

knees to them in my effort to get at a reason. They sit in smug and stupid silence. Therefore I was forced to, by logic, arrive at a conclusion that would satisfy my reason. I racked my brain for nights and days. I had violated no rule or law of the club. I was absolutely clear on all points. I examined myself ruthlessly, and the conclusion was finally forced on me that it was a case of personal animus. Eliminating all other causes, this was what remained.

My letter did just what I hoped and expected it would do, viz.: bring home to the Board the absurdity of not informing me of the reason of their action. It is not only unjust to me, it is equally so to you. You say you had no connection with the matter, which is no doubt true. But why in the name of common sense doesn't the Board write me that, instead of letting you do it, in justice to you and me; and then why doesn't it go on and finish the matter up by writing me a simple and dignified letter alleging some cause—any cause—I don't care what?

My whole point in this matter has been from the beginning, that the only thing objectionable to me was the mystery atmosphere. I insisted, begged, cajoled, implored, threatened—to no purpose. No, the Board is deaf and blind. A man who has been a member for the best fifteen years of his life is suddenly written a grossly insulting letter by a set of men whom he had no reason to regard other than as friends, and then is refused the courtesy of a simple explanation.

I don't, in my heart, think the Board of Governors are intentionally injuring me. But they are behaving in a rather stupid manner. They, no doubt through a misconception, arrived at an estimate of me that seemed to them at the time, to justify their action, and now that they are in a hole, they don't know how to get out of it.

I have never mentioned this subject outside of the Board until someone first mentioned it to me, and yet the matter is a town scandal. The man who is responsible for that should be asked to resign, surely.

The idea of your animus toward me came first from that old lady, Isaac Cook, and he never fails to inform me that you "Have it in for me" and repeats to me something that you have said of me. There was no escaping my conclusion. The road ran straight, with no turns. Now, that you destroy that theory, the thing is a greater mystery than ever. So long as it is a mystery, so long will it be a scandal. If ever a man's life was "open for inspection," mine is. Though the Board would be just as wrong in its position if I were a moral leper. Why don't those giant intellects in the Board either make a case against me or capitulate?

Are they afraid of legal action? Please quiet their fears. They are damaging me now by asking me to resign, spreading the news and refusing a reason, but I don't care for the hundred thousand or so, I could get by suing, because, believe it or not as you wish, I am afraid of too much money. I've seen too many men ruined by it. Not enough has never hurt any one.

Permit me one word more. Were I as stupid, as mean, as short-sighted and as small as the Board of Governors of the Country Club, I could say to you now, "I don't believe what your note contains," and force the Board to cease ignoring me.

From a material standpoint I am delighted to be rid of the Country Club, but the underhanded, cowardly manner in which I was handled has given me an object in life. For two years past I've wondered why I contributed \$100.00 a year toward the support of an old, broken-down club house, and the poorest golf links, without exception, around St. Louis. Perhaps it was on account of the social prestige (?) it gave me. I pause to smile. Society doesn't interest me nearly so much as I seem to interest it.

Pardon the length of this epistle, but I am rather full of the subject, and when I get on it, never know when to stop.

Yours truly,

H. S. Turner.

CHAPTER XI.

Speaking of philosophy (not that anyone was, but why not, as Maurice Ketten says), there are worse philosophers than Tod Sloan, the one-time premier jockey of the world. I remember once when he was valetting me in a "gentleman's" race at the old Fair Grounds some advice he gave me before the start. "Remember, they don't pay off in the back stretch," said Tod. "Wait, wait, they'll come back to you." It turned out on that occasion, that I was so engaged in thinking of Tod's philosophy that I forgot to win at any stage of the race, but that doesn't disprove the philosophy.

And Brooklyn Tommy Sullivan, that great little general of the prize ring, he has a philosophy, too. It is idle to deny that Attell can box rings around him, and yet there is no record of its having availed Abie. Tommy used to say to me, "Make the other guy lead—make him come to you and stall while you're strong. The secret of de game," he would iterate, "is to make him lead and miss and den you kin do what you want wit him. Hold your punch—never hit him as hard as you kin 'till you git him where you kin knock him out."

I think one of the most profound things that was ever uttered is that of Wilde's: "What one does in one's secret chamber, he will some day shout from the housetops." I have tried to live in accord-

ance with the suggestion contained in that wonderful bit of psychology with indifferent success, but that is not the point. I wish to call attention to the fact that psychology is fast becoming so exact a science that one with the gift of it can read in the faces of men the story of their secret lives. He can recognize at a glance the man who has spent his day behind closed doors in a down town office scheming devilment, or in the face of the society woman, he can see the starved maternal instinct, the cruel lust for power, the perverted womanliness. Psychology is the greater politics.

All things extremely anti, or extremely pro, are funny in varying degree, but a female anti-suffragist is the quintessence of amusing things. The only possible excuse for her position is the desire for a "miserable ease," but she has not the intelligence to know that to be anti-suffrage at this time is not the way to secure it. I love to see a great locomotive spin its drivers when starting a heavy train. It is such an inspiring exhibition of power. The anti-suffragist is the grease on the rails that causes the engine to spin its drivers. The militant suffragist is the one redeeming feature in modern life, the one puzzling feature to a philosopher. She is the only sign pointing away from decadence. How long has it been since anyone died for a principle? Quite a time, I believe. The action of the young militant who threw herself under the King's horse, would have stirred the poets of other days, but nothing stirs a modern poet except erotica or money.



CHAPTER XII.

It is very difficult for me to hold to the subject-matter of this book. I'm so much more interested in other things—but to return to our pork chops:

About this time there was another lull in the correspondence and I found myself wondering if all this tempest in a tea cup had been stirred up by some action of an ancestor of mine, and not being familiar with my own genealogy, I resolved to look into it. Meeting my cousin, Mrs. Elisha Dyer, Jr., on the street in New York, and knowing that she had followed this sort of thing, I asked her if any of us had ever been hung. Next morning she sent me the following, which if correct, shows that I have no excuse for having been asked to resign from the Country Club, nor for any other disreputable action of which I may be guilty, so far as my paternal inheritance goes.

"The spelling of the name Turner is of no moment, as it varies even among first cousins of the direct line, and is variously spelled as follows: Tour-noir, Tournour, Turnour, and Turner, as pronounced in Virginia since 1708.

The original seat of the family in Normandy was Le Tournoir (The Black Tower) from which comes the name, and its owners were known as "je Suis de Tournoir" and bore the motto "*Epec Quane Videse*" (to be—not to seem to be).

A visit to the family graveyard of the Virginia branch at Smith's Mount, Westmoreland County, Virginia, in 1854, showed the graves to have been well cared for. Beneath the inscription on the tomb of Major Harry Turner, of King George, could be seen deeply and beautifully carved the Turner coat of arms, "He beareth ermine on a quarter-pierced argent," by name Turner of Parendon in Essex, Kt. Crest: Lion Rampant, supporting an hour glass.

The first of the line known to English history was Edward (Tournour) Turner, a Norman Knight of noble origin, who went to England with the Conqueror, and was rewarded for his valor by large grants of land, and was seated at Haverill in Suffolk. Arthur Turner, a descendant, was a benchor of the Middle Temple in the reign of James I, and Edward, his son, was Captain of the King's Guard, in the time of Charles I, and was seated at Little Paringdon, Essex.

During the political changes of that period the Turner family suffered many hardships. Their lands were confiscated and many of the family were imprisoned and many suffered death, but Edward (Tournour) Turner, a direct descendant of the Norman Knight of the same name, born in 1617 at the home of his uncle, Sir Thomas Moulson, Lord Mayor of London, in Thread-

needle street, London, rose to distinction and in a measure retrieved the family fortunes. Educated at Oxford he was admitted to the Middle Temple in 1634, and called to the bar in 1640; was in Cromwell's second and third Parliaments, representing Essex; was also in the Parliaments of Richard, the Protector (1658); was again in Parliament in 1660, and in 1662 was restored his title and estates, and immediately on the restoration was counsel for the King in the trial of the regicides, and especially distinguished himself in those of Harrison and Cook (see "Old Judges"). Was elected speaker of the House of Commons and held that position for twelve years; was solicitor general to the King and made Chief Baron of the Exchequer, which position he held for four years. Died March, 1676, and was buried in the chancel of Little Paringdon Church, Essex.

Sir Edward Turner, the subject of this sketch, was twice married. The oldest son by his first wife was Sir Edward Turner, member of Parliament from Oxford, in Suffolk, whose daughter, Sarah, was the grandmother of Edward Turner Garth, and was in 1761 created Baron and in 1675 Earl of Winton.

Sir Gregory Page, dying without issue, his title and estate descended to his nephew, Arthur Turner; hence the blending of the Page-Turner arms.

Dr. Thomas Turner, brother of the first Sir Edward above mentioned, better known as Turner of Walsingham, was born at Little Paringdon, Essex, in 1619; was educated at Oxford, married and came to Virginia about 1650. He took up large grants of land in King George, Essex and Prince William Counties, known as Walsingham, Natzattico, Port, Conway, etc., and was first of his line in Virginia; was late in life legal heir to the family title and estates, but for political reasons refused to return to England to secure them; died at Walsingham leaving a son, Thomas Turner II, who married in 1711, Martha, the daughter of Colonel Richard Taliaferro, and had Major Harry Turner of King George, who married Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Colonel Nicholas Smith, of Smith's Mount, Westmoreland County, Virginia, by whom he had three sons, only one of whom lived, namely: Thomas Turner III, who married Jane, daughter of Colonel William Faunt le Roy, of Naylor's Hold, Richmond County, Virginia; fourth in descent from Moore Faunt le Roy, first of his line in America and twenty-fifth in the line of descent from Henry I, of France, and Ann of Russia, through the marriage of Tristan Fauntleroy, in 1539, to John Stourton, daughter of Lord Stourton. So it will be seen that the Turners also trace to the baronial house of Stourton Fitz-Harding and Berkely in Gloucester, England, and the feudal houses of Courtenay and De Lusignan, of France. (See Brown's "Americans of Royal Descent.")

Thomas Turner III, and Jane Faunt le Roy, his wife, had issue as follows: Elizabeth Taliaferro, Harry Smith, Richard, George, Jane, Faunt le Roy, Thomas and Marie. Elizabeth married Charles Cooke, of Charles City County, Virginia. Henry

Smith, second child and eldest son, born 1770, inherited Smith's Mount, Westmoreland County, and Wheatlands, Jefferson County, and in 1796 married Catherine Scott Blackburn, daughter of Colonel Thomas Blackburn, of Ripon Lodge, Prince William County, Virginia, and his wife, Christian Scott, who was daughter of Rev. James Scott, of Westwood, Prince William County, Virginia, and wife, Sarah Brown Scott, eldest of the "lovely nine," consequently daughter of Francis Fowke and Dr. Gustavus Brown of Nanjemoy, Charles County, Maryland.

Colonel Henry Smith Turner and his wife, Catherine Scott Blackburn, had issue as follows: Susan, married Alibone; Jane, married Byrd; Christine, married Cordell; George, Bushrod Washington and William Fauntleroy. George Turner, major in the United States Army, was killed at Harpers Ferry during the John Brown raid. Bushrod Washington Turner was lost at sea. William Fauntleroy Turner married Ellen Beirne; issue one daughter, who married Colonel John Selden Saunders, United States Army and Confederate Army; issue Ellen Beirne Saunders, who married Steward, United States Navy; W. F. Turner Saunders, United States Navy. Sidney Patterson Saunders married Vernon, United States Navy, and Martha Saunders married Charles Carroll of Baltimore.

William Fauntleroy Turner married, second, Sidney Patterson, of Baltimore; issue Sidney Smith Turner, who married first Donnell Swan; issue Laura Patterson Swan, second husband Elisha Dyer, Jr., of Newport, R. I.

Thomas Turner IV, son of Thomas III, married Eliza Randolph, daughter of Colonel Robert Randolph, of Eastern View, Fauquier County, Virginia; issue Major Harry Smith Turner, United States Army, of St. Louis, who married Julia Hunt.

The Lees, Turners, Fauntleroy's, Harrisons, Washingtons, Lewises, Taliaferros, St. Georges, Tuckers, Beverleys and many other colonial families are descendants of the original Sir Edward Turner."

* * *

Major Harry Smith Turner and Julia Hunt were my grandparents. My father was Thomas T. Turner and my mother is Harriet S. Turner—nee Brown, of Tennessee.

On my mother's side I find there have been some "cut ups." For instance, there was my grandfather, who was a friend and disciple of Lord Byron's and who bore a striking resemblance to him. They say he was a very bad boy. He took the "short way out of it" at thirty-three. Then there was old General Ewell, who was most eccentric, and who liked to be left alone for days, and would never permit anyone in his apartments. And then, on the other side, was General Lee, himself, who it seems was a rebellious spirit, still I have never been conscious of a warlike tendency. I vastly prefer peace on any decent terms.

CHAPTER XIII.

The correspondence next following would be exceedingly dry and uninteresting were not the reader behind the scenes, so to speak. From that vantage point we can instruct ourselves by observing the business methods of clubs and organizations, operated by great business men. I am so accustomed to being patronized by business men that I have come to enjoy it. Note how that great business genius, George Herbert Walker, sold my stock for my account by taking it over to the St. Louis Union Trust Company and handing it to the Secretary of the Club. The usual commission in the brokerage business, I believe, is one-quarter of one per cent, but in this instance I was not charged anything.

NEW ST. LOUIS COUNTRY CLUB.

Office of Secretary.

H. H. Langenberg, Secretary,
Chamber of Commerce Bldg.

St. Louis, Mo., Oct. 14, 1911.

Mr. H. S. Turner, Jr.,
5023 Delmar Ave.,
City.

Dear Sir:—

Your letter of the 13th to hand, and contents noted.

I enclose you Certificate of Membership in the New St. Louis Country Club.

Please send to me the receipt issued by you to the St. Louis Union Trust Co., for the share of stock which you turned in to the old St. Louis Country Club.

The reason for my delay in answering your several letters is due to the fact that I have been out of the city for the past few months.

I am,

Yours very truly,
(Signed) H. H. Langenberg.

H. S. TURNER, JR.,
St. Louis.

G. H. Walker, Esq., Broker, St. Louis, Oct. 14, 1911.
St. Louis.

Dear Bert.

I enclose certificate of stock in the Country Club. Please have the same sold for my account in the regular course of business, and oblige,
Yours truly,

G. H. Walker, St. Louis. (Signed) H. S. Turner, Jr.

October 17th, 1911.

Dear Harry:

Yours of the 16th with certificates of C. C. received.

I have sent same over to Tom West, Jr., Treasurer, and he advises me that he will remit directly to you a check for Four Hundred Dollars.

Trusting that it will reach you in due time, I am,

Faithfully yours,

(Signed) G. H. Walker.

To H. S. Turner, Jr., Esq., No. 5023 Delmar Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri.

H. S. TURNER, JR.,

St. Louis.

St. Louis, Mo., Oct. 19, 1911.

To the Board of Governors, C. C.

On July 1st, I received the following letter from the Board of Governors of the Country Club, which seemed to imply, that if I resigned they would tell me the reason for writing letter of June 6th:

"Answering your letter of June 29. The request of the board for your resignation has never been complied with. Therefore it is impossible to give you any answer at this time."

During the latter part of July and early August (I made no memorandum of the date) Mr. Lee Benoist told me that Mr. Walker had been to see him, or that he had met him, and that Mr. Walker had told him to tell me that if I would resign from the club, that their letter requesting my resignation would be withdrawn. I told Mr. Benoist to tell Mr. Walker that he had conveyed the message to me, and that there was no answer.

On August 22nd I received the following letter from Dan'l. G. Taylor, a member of your board:—

"I have yours of the 19th inst., and have delayed writing because I have hardly known just what to say.

"You probably do not realize that in each of your letters you insert some sentence that makes it a little bit difficult to answer you calmly."

"I do not believe that I can succeed in getting the Board of the Country Club to comply with your request, to the effect that they stated that your resignation was requested on the ground that you were "*persona non grata*" to a member of the Board or of the Club. I cannot speak for the board, nor do I feel at liberty to make any statement with respect to their action. But I will, as soon as the board convenes, present your request that they formulate some charge against you, or make a statement to you of their reasons for requesting your resignation.

"The board must decide as a body what it will do in the premises. I can neither speak for them nor decide this matter for them.

"It is needless for me to say to you that there are many reasons why the existing situation is particularly distressing to me."

Today I received another letter from D. G. Taylor as follows:—

"It is utterly impossible for me to say to you what action the Board of Directors of the Country Club are going to take. I was not present at the last meeting and have not heard what action was taken. I am afraid that you take an exaggerated view of the importance of the attitude of the club on the subject."

After writing numberless letters, and using every means at my command to induce you to do me the simple justice of removing the mystery surrounding your letter of June 6th, I determined to comply with your letter of July 1st, in the hope that you were sincere in what you said in it, and on September 27th I wrote you, stating that I would resign from your club.

That is nearly a month ago. You have not had the courtesy or consideration to reply to that letter, or acknowledge it in any way.

In the meantime Mr. G. H. Walker came to me in the Racquet Club and gave me his verbal promise that he would recommend that the board write me the letter that I desired.

Judge Taylor has not kept his promise to me, the Board of Governors have not kept their more or less ambiguous promise to me, and of course I have no means of knowing whether Mr. Walker has or not.

I had assumed from what Mr. Walker told me, that his recommendation would be sufficient to secure for me the letter that I desire, and on that assumption, and in perfect good faith I sent him my certificate of stock, and asked him to find a purchaser for it. I received from him today the following letter:—

"Yours of the 16th with certificate of C. C. received.

"I have sent same over to Tom West, Jr., Treasurer, and he advises me that he will remit directly to you a check for Four Hundred Dollars.

"Trusting that it will reach you in due time, I am,"

I also enclose copy of my reply.

Now inasmuch as there has been unquestionably, according to the evidence, a deliberate attempt to injure me in the eyes of this community, and inasmuch as you have not seen fit to carry out any of your promises or agreements, verbal or otherwise, I hereby withdraw my resignation, and will have no further direct communication with your board, or any member of it.

Yours truly, (Signed) H. S. Turner.

Mr. Benj. Gratz, Pres. New St. Louis Country Club, St. Louis, Missouri."

H. S. TURNER, JR.
5023 Delmar Boulevard,
St. Louis.

Dear Mr. West:—

October 31, 1911.

I return herewith voucher No. 741 for Four Hundred Dollars (\$400.00).

Please see my letter to Mr. G. H. Walker, also my letter to the Board of Governors, which will explain my action.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) H. S. Turner.

Mr. Thomas H. West, Jr., 401 Locust Street, St. Louis, Mo.

ST. LOUIS COUNTRY CLUB.

Office of Treasurer.

St. Louis, October 19th, 1911.

Mr. H. S. Turner, Jr.,
5023 Delmar Boulevard,
St. Louis, Mo.

Dear Harry:

Yours of the 19th received. You are evidently under a misapprehension as to the present procedure in regard to the transfer of membership in the Country Club. Under the old organization memberships could be sold and the certificate transferred, but under the present order of things when a resignation becomes effective and so soon as the board elects some one to fill the vacancy a check for \$400.00 is remitted by the Treasurer of the Country Club to the person resigning. There is no such thing as stock ownership any more, as the Club now has the same kind of charter as the Racquet, University and other clubs. Hence a certificate of membership after a member has resigned and his resignation has been accepted means nothing, excepting that the Treasurer of the Club will demand its surrender before remitting the \$400.00.

In view of your letter I will ask the Treasurer to hold off for the present until I hear further from you.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) G. H. Walker.

P. S.—There is no way of doing what you wish.

GHW—MM

GHW.

ST. LOUIS COUNTRY CLUB.

Office of Treasurer.

Thos. H. West, Jr., Treas.
401 Locust St.

St. Louis, October 19th, 1911.

Mr. H. S. Turner, Jr.,
5023 Delmar Blvd.,
St. Louis, Missouri.

Dear Sir:—

Enclosed find check for \$400.00, redemption of your membership in the New St. Louis Country Club, to which you are entitled on account of your resignation from said Club, according to the By-Laws.

Yours truly,

(Signed) Thos. H. West, Jr.,
Secy.

H. S. TURNER, JR.,
5023 Delmar Boulevard,
St. Louis.

October 19, 1911.

Dear Bert:—

I was surprised to receive yours of the 17th, this morning. I thought my letter to you, enclosing certificates in the Country Club was explicit, and that I wrote to you as a broker, and asked you to find an individual to purchase the certificate.

I had no idea that you would turn it over to the Country Club treasurer, which of course I could have done myself, but, for reasons of my own, did not wish to do it.

Will you kindly write to the Treasurer of the Country Club, and get possession of the certificate and return same to me.

Thanking you in advance, I am,

Yours truly,

(Signed) H. S. Turner.

Mr. G. H. Walker, 309 N. 4th St., St. Louis, Mo.

NEW ST. LOUIS COUNTRY CLUB.

Office of Secretary.

H. H. Langenberg, Secretary,
Chamber of Commerce Bldg.

St. Louis, Mo., Oct. 23, 1911.

Mr. H. S. Turner,
City.

Dear Sir:—

At the regular monthly meeting of the Board of Governors of the New St. Louis Country Club, held October 12, 1911, your letter of resignation was placed before the board and it was moved and voted that your resignation be accepted.

The Treasurer of the Club will, as soon as your membership is disposed of, send you a check for Four Hundred Dollars.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) H. H. Langenberg, Secy.

ST. LOUIS COUNTRY CLUB.

Office of Treasurer.

Thos. H. West, Jr., Treas.
401 Locust St.

St. Louis, October 25th, 1911.

Mr. H. S. Turner, Jr.,
5023 Delmar Blvd.,
St. Louis, Missouri.

Dear Harry:—

I am in receipt of your letter returning voucher issued by New St. Louis Country Club for \$400.00, which I sent you in payment for your membership.

I spoke to Bert Walker and he states that you turned in to him your certificate of membership asking him to dispose of

same for you. I think that you have the wrong impression about the way this business is now handled.

Before the Club was re-organized we had certificates of stock, which could be bought and sold, but in the New Club the retiring member has nothing that he can dispose of, and simply holds a certificate of membership, which is nothing more than a receipt for his initiation fee, and is not negotiable. You, no doubt, have the New Country Club Book, and if you will read Section 9 of Article I of the By-Laws on page 12, this matter is fully explained.

The rule is that a retiring member is entitled to \$400.00 when vacancy caused by his retirement is filled, so I herewith return you check, and trust that I have made the matter plain.

Yours very truly,
(Sigend) Thos. H. West, Jr.

H. S. TURNER, JR.
5023 Delmar Boulevard,
St. Louis.

October 26, 1911,

Dear Sir:—

I have a letter from Langenberg this morning stating that my resignation is accepted.

You gentlemen remind me of the Festive Ostrich. You think that because your heads are in the sand that nobody can see you.

So after you received my last letter you consulted your by-laws and made a discovery! Your stupidity is terrifying. It is only equaled by your heartlessness.

Can you not see what is as plain as a pike staff; that it is not I that can be injured in this skirmish? In fact I am the only one who can't be injured. When it all becomes public, it may be accepted humorously—it has some comedic aspects—but it might not—might not I said, and if it isn't, it may result in serious complications—I said may; and all because you haven't sense enough to know when you are licked and are not men enough to say "we are mistaken."

I wonder how the women of the Country Club and of the city generally, will like your remark to me in your office, "That they have to be protected"—a vicious calumny of every woman who goes to your club. Please do not "protect" any of the women members of my family who may go out there. They can take care of themselves.

To foresee your last letter required a little prophetic quality, but not much.

After I wrote you the last time, I made a rough draft of what I thought your reply would be, and gave it to a friend. Your reply is not word for word, because my letter was written in good English, but with that exception it is about the same.

One should be under obligations to another who does him an injustice, because in the interim between when the latter re-

sists righting the wrong and when he finally does it, he's on the griddle, to the intense amusement of the first party, and amusement is the greatest asset we have.

I think Bert Walker has the best head among you. Its the only reason I deliberately made him an enemy, that I might have a foil. But he lost the road. He should have given his talents to bigger things instead of to the Country Club. However he is acting with more discretion than any of the rest of you, and while that is not much, still it is something, and even the devil isn't such an awfully bad fellow, come to know him.

Thanking you in advance for your letter of apology, I am

Yours respectfully,
(Signed) H. S. Turner.

Mr. Benj. Gratz, Pres.,
Country Club,
St. Louis, Mo.

October 26, 1911.

H. S. TURNER, JR.,
5023 Delmar Boulevard,
St. Louis.

Dear Tom:

I have yours of October 15th, and return herewith voucher for \$400.00.

You were correct in a sense, for I was laboring under the impression that the certificate was the same as stock, and I wanted it then sold in the regular way to prove my sincerity in complying with the following letter of the board:

July 1, 1911.

"Mr. H. S. Turner, Jr.,
Saint Louis, Mo.

Dear Sir:—

Answering your letter of June 29.

The request of the board for your resignation has never been complied with. Therefore it is impossible to give you any answer at this time.

Yours truly,
H. H. Langenberg,
Secretary."

I did this for the purpose of exhausting every possible means of obtaining from your board the simple justice of a reason for your previous letter requesting my resignation. However, if you will refer to your By-Laws you will find that a resignation is not effective until the board has acted on it, and after waiting nearly a month, and not hearing of any action being taken, I withdrew my resignation which left the matter exactly as it was before I resigned.

Therefore you will see that it is necessary to accept return of this voucher, and that I remain a member until the matter is

settled to my satisfaction. Surely the heathen Chinese has nothing on your honorable board.

Yours very truly,
(Signed) H. S. Turner.

Mr. Thomas H. West, Jr.,
401 Locust Street,
St. Louis, Mo.

H. S. TURNER, JR.
5023 Delmar Boulevard,
St. Louis.

Dear Dan:

Can you give me an approximately correct idea as to when I am going to "get what is coming to me" from the Country Club. Fear of a thing is always worse than the thing itself, and naturally I wish to cease trembling as soon as possible.

Sincerely,
(Signed) Harry Turner.

October 17, 1911.

The delay in righting this wrong is injuring me seriously.
(Laughter.)

H. S. T.

DANIEL G. TAYLOR,
St. Louis.

October 18th, 1911.
Personal.

Dear Harry:

It is utterly impossible for me to say to you what action the Board of Directors of the Country Club are going to take. I was not present at the last meeting and have not heard what action was taken. I am afraid that you take an exaggerated view of the importance of the attitude of the club on the subject.

Sincerely,
(Signed) Dan.

H. S. Turner, Jr., Esq.,
5023 Delmar Blvd.,
St. Louis, Mo.

H. S. TURNER, JR.,
5023 Delmar Boulevard,
St. Louis.

October 19, 1911.

Dear Dan:

Sure. It's only a good joke now—but it was very serious when you all sat around the board and proceeded to put the knife into me.

You say you don't know what the board is going to do, but you said to me at the Racquet Club, in the following words:

"If that's your attitude you'll get what's coming to you. I'll advise the board to not answer your letters." So that's the reason I wrote to you.

G. H. W. has given me his verbal promise that he will recommend to the board that they write me their reasons for their letter, but I am in the position of the small boy who was with his father when they met a man who had just moved into the country. "Come out and see me sometime," said the man from the country, "And bring the boy. We have a fine apple orchard, and ponies to ride, and a fine hay loft." The father of the boy thanked the man and was about to pass on when he felt a tugging at his coat: "Papa," said the boy, "Ask that man when."

I know the Country Club is going to give me a reason all right. Yes, I know that, but what I'm trying to get at now is when, and I thought naturally if you had the power to prevent their answering my letters, according to your own statement, that it was reasonable to assume that you had the power to induce them to answer them, hence my note.

I agree with you that the whole thing is an excellent joke, but unfortunately very few have as keen a sense of humor as you and I.

Sincerely,
(Signed) H. S. Turner.

Hon. Dan'l S. Taylor,
Third National Bk. Bldg.,
St. Louis, Mo.



CHAPTER XIV.

The following correspondence is fun, pure and simple. There is no malice in it, and as every one knows, there can be no sin without malice. I do not know whether I am a member of the Country Club or not and have no idea of trying to find out by putting in a personal appearance on the grounds of that institution. However, I sent my horse out there, he not being as sensitive, or else more contemptuous than I am, and I received a bill for his board in due course of time, which I have not as yet paid, for clearly if I am not a member I was not entitled to send my horse to the Club's stables, and if I am a member it is through no fault of mine.

H. S. TURNER, JR.
5023 Delmar Boulevard,
St. Louis.

To The Board of Governors,
Country Club.
Dear Sirs:—

As a member of the Country Club, I wish to call your attention to the statement made to me by Mr. Benjamin Gratz, in his office, on the ninth day of June last.

I went there for the purpose of ascertaining from him, the reason behind your letter of June 6th. He refused to say anything except "We must protect the women of the Country Club." What this had to do with the subject about which I called on him, I do not know, but that it is a vicious, scandalous and false statement, there is no doubt.

As a member of the Club, and as a man with seven sisters, I submit that Mr. Gratz should withdraw this statement, or be asked to resign from the Club.

I shall be glad to appear before you in person, should I be required.

Yours respectfully,
(Signed) H. S. Turner.

H. S. TURNER, JR.
5023 Delmar Boulevard.
St. Louis.

Board of Governors,
Country Club,
City.

Nov. 23, 1911.

Gentlemen:—

I expect to leave the city to-night to be gone a week, so if you require me to appear before you with regard to my charges against Mr. Gratz, kindly postpone the meeting until my return.

I am not in the least surprised that you do not answer my letters; in fact, I would be surprised if you did, because I know you are advised by the Honorable Daniel G. Taylor.

I once heard Hon. Daniel G. Taylor express himself on an occasion when the House of Lords of England invited George Bernard Shaw to speak before it, and after that gentleman had made a speech full of wit and common sense, the members of the House of Lords arose in a body and solemnly left the Chamber without answering Mr. Shaw. The Honorable Daniel G. Taylor could not conceal his admiration of the insult offered Mr. Shaw, and thought the House of Lords had done a thing of dignity and force. That was the beginning of the end of the House of Lords. To-day it is an extinct volcano, and Mr. Shaw looms up a gigantic figure in the world. So you see I realized from the first what the attitude of the Board of Governors of the Country Club, advised by the Honorable Daniel G. Taylor, would be. If the theory of evolution was the survival of the fittest, I realize that I would have no chance.

I am very anxious to resign from the Country Club, and do not like to be placed in the position that you have got me into, viz.: that you will not accept my resignation except on terms no man worthy of the name would accept. I assure you that it is very humiliating to me to belong to a Club headed by a man guilty of the statement about womankind that I am prepared to prove Mr. Gratz made.

Yours very truly,
(Signed) H. S. Turner.

H. S. TURNER, JR.
5023 Delmar Boulevard,
St. Louis.

Board of Governors,
New St. Louis Country Club.
Gentlemen:—

Some two weeks since I sent a letter of resignation to the New St. Louis Country Club, addressed to Mr. Thomas H. West, Jr., and received no acknowledgment, other than a check for \$400. My recollection is that I paid \$1000.00 for this stock, and in addition several assessments, but that is not the point I wish to make.

Your By-Laws state that a resignation is not effective until your board has met and acted on the same, and notified the person resigning to that effect.

I note now that there is a proposition to sell if possible, your present archaic plant and purchase a new site and erect buildings thereon, no doubt due to my criticism. Inasmuch as the only members capable of financing a thing of this sort have built homes around the present Club house, and their property would be depreciated by the contemplated move, they, in true club spirit, are against it. Therefore, from three to five hundred dollars will be assessed against each member.

Now I want it distinctly understood that I am not a member of the New St. Louis Country Club, your By-Laws to the contrary notwithstanding, and if you did not meet and act and notify me, the fault is not mine, and I will not hold myself responsible for this assessment. I do not consider the present mediocre Golf Club worth that amount to me, and, as I do not expect to be in St. Louis two or three years hence, which time it would take to get a new site in running order, I am not interested in the proposition. I also feel that the statement of your President to the effect that the women of the Country Club cannot be trusted, is an additional reason for my lack of interest.

I not only wrote you repeatedly and put my desire to resign in every conceivable form, but allowed my emissary, Mr. Paramore, to meet with you in regard to the subject. He advised me afterwards, that your attitude seemed to be to "Let it drop" or "Say nothing more about it." Now I cannot in justice to myself do this, and shall notify you that under no circumstances will I continue as a member.

In view of the fact that I could get no action from your board I had contemplated submitting the matter to the club at large, but that would have resulted no doubt in a request for a resignation of Benjamin Gratz, but as he was never heard of before he was president of your organization and would no doubt sink into complete obscurity if he resigned, and as I bore not the slightest ill-will toward him, I decided that action on my part would not be fair. It is true, of course, that he might be elected President of the Columbian Club on his name alone, but even that is doubtful.

Please take notice that notwithstanding the personal solicitation of a Falstaffian member of your board, I must decline to longer remain a member of the club. As an outsider, I feel that I am free to take any action that I may see fit, without the slightest grounds for a charge of unclubable conduct.

With best wishes, I am,

Yours very truly,
(Signed) H. S. Turner.

P. S.—Since dictating the above I have learned that the members owning homes surrounding the club are not in the financial condition I imagined, and as I wish to do no injustice, I withdraw the statement.



CHAPTER XV.

Mr. Paramore reported to me, after his interview, that Messers. Walker, West, Gratz, et al., complained that I had not asked them to do anything for me; and there you have the crux of the whole matter. True enough, I had only asked for the reason of their action, or rather demanded it. I had not, on bended knee, asked that the letter be withdrawn. Imagine me, Harry Turner, asking a Gratz or a Walker or a West for anything! I seem to hear peals of Homeric laughter. These gentlemen apparently regard themselves as Deities—"Ask and you shall receive." They wanted to humiliate me, that was all. And that is about all life is, a perpetual struggle on the part of the proletarian to humiliate the aristocrat. He has never succeeded in doing it and he never will, for the true aristocrat vastly prefers annihilation, and hence Christian democracy merely means a degenerating standard, until finally the lowest and largest number prevails. The proletarian, by sheer force of numbers, eliminates the aristocrat, and is in turn put out of business by the Jew, who will be superseded by the negro or some other low, unwarlike type.

The fight between the North and the South was the proletarian of the North versus the aristocrat of the South. The Southerners fought better, but were out-numbered. The North was jealous of the brains, breeding, culture and wealth of the South and so made slavery (a purely abstract question) a pretended issue, just as though there was not a worse form of slavery existing in the mills of the North in the shape of child labor and wage bondage. The South fought for its property, which it had bought from the Northern slave traders, and then the North started a war to free the negro. It is to laugh. The hell of a lot the North cared about the negro. (Or am I wrong? Did they care more for the black man than they did for their own flesh and blood?) The North wanted to destroy the aristocracy of the South and slavery was the catch word used to do it.

And still the fight goes merrily on. If one is superior mentally, physically, genealogically and financially, he will be overpowered in some other direction by hosts of his inferiors. The usual method is to adopt "morality" as a slogan, just as though the object of morality was not to create just such a type of aristocrat; or, if the reverse be true, and the superior man by mental, physical, genealogical and financial standards is an immoralist, then is not "morality" the thing to be questioned and not the superior man? In other words, if so-called immoral men are superior in every other valuation, is it not possible that we have a false concept of "morality," and that the abstraction

should be attacked rather than the individual? Mental, physical and financial cripples are "moral" perforce, just as eunuchs are, but is the eunuch a superior being because he is sexless, and is not the creation of the superior man the aim of life? Socrates, the preacher of virtue, was both impotent and hideous to look upon. "Verily, many times have I laughed at those weaklings who think they are good because they have lame paws." Talk of virtue to young men and you encourage solitary vice; talk of vice to old men and you will stir up yearnings that will cause them to hate you.

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien
As to be hated, needs but to be seen.
But seen too oft, familiar with its face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

Did Pope intend to mean that vice improves on acquaintance and is not so bad as it appears at first blush? If so, I do not agree with him. I think, however, Pope intended to convey the impression that vice is frightful, but he did not succeed in making himself clear. However, vice is the result of the ideal of virtue, which is an impossible ideal, but are not all ideals impossible and are they not therefore ugly and mischievous in that they disparage that which is real and true in favor of that which is false and unattainable, and hence lead to misery and morbidity?

This was Ibsen's sole idea. All of his works are variations of this one theme.

That men prefer virtue in a woman, in a physical sense, is not true. Men of means, i. e., free men, seem to lean the other way. The man of the world prefers the woman of the world. To be obsessed with chastity in a woman is to be obsessed with the physical. Virgins often have no souls. How could they? for to extirpate a part of life is to extirpate it all. The man who marries a woman because she is virtuous, loves respectability (i. e., the opinion of others), or licentiousness, more than he does the woman.

Oh, the amount of misery and death and destruction, I have seen this belief in "morality" cause. How could immorality (i. e., sex relations outside of the sanction of the church) cause suicide, murder, degradation, abortion, social-evil, etc., were it not for a belief in the sanction of the church? And yet a belief in the sanction of the church is not as strong and cannot be as strong at the instinct to procreate. How could it be? To believe that it is, is to have cause and effect so fundamentally confused that happiness, even contentment, even temporary peace of mind, is impossible.

And at its best, to what does this belief in "morality" lead? To nothingness—to nihilism—for those who are economically free. Immorality is a compromise between nirvana and love, and so long as love is spat upon in favor of ease or respectability or virtue, so long will immorality be in the ascendancy, as at present.

Men preach "morality" (and not one of them is without "sin"), because they wish to convey the impression that they are chaste, that is, superior, to ordinary mortals. It would be nothing more than cheap self-deception, this assumption of superiority and hardly worthy of notice, were it not that this preaching of morality by whited sepulchers deceives fine, pure, strong, sincere, passionate natures (to whom chastity is terribly difficult, if not impossible) into a belief in their own unworthiness, often causing them to become misanthropes, even suicides. Cheap, paltry people, to whom deceit is second nature, and to whom passion is merely curiosity, manage very nicely. To judge men by moral law, which is an artificial standard invented by the weak, impotent and degenerate herd in order to overpower the strong, free, life-giving individual, is to reverse the true purpose of life.

The object of baseball is not to amuse, nor to make money, it is to produce a Ty Cobb. The object of life is the same in a biological and world sense. If virtue interferes with this purpose, away with it. If vice interferes with it, down with vice. At this stage of civilization, the stronger men are being destroyed by hosts of gnats who call themselves "moralists," and hence it were better to give "immorality" value in order to circumvent them. When virtue *per se* becomes desirable, the way to restore it will be to forbid it. Truly virtuous people, in the Roman sense, i. e., the strong and free and fearless, are invariably attracted toward that which is forbidden. If it be desirable to encourage exceptional men and women toward certain actions, forbid those actions. Exceptional men and women have no fear and the forbidden to them has untold fascinations. This all psychologists know. As Wilde puts it: "Women should be happier than men—so much more is forbidden them."

If virtue were forbidden by the bourgeoisie, and the penalty for it were death, I might perhaps become so virtuous, that compared to me Caesar's wife would have been a Cleopatra.

I Love Christ and Machiavel, Nietzsche and the Pope, Mary Magdalene and The Virgin Mary, God and the convict, my Father and myself. I hate the Bourgeoisie.

When we no longer believe in God, as at present, we must believe in men, but when men are all equal, theoretically, as in a democracy, that is impossible; so logically as night the day, nihilism follows; and after that, the discovery that men are not equal, which means the end of the theory of democracy (even Christianity). The discovery that one great individual is worth numberless thousands of mediocre men is the beginning of the renaissance—of the pyramid—with the aristocratic thinker and poet at the top, the slave at the bottom and all the varying ranks in proper position between, which is the natural order of society.

Only the aristocrat is fit to govern, in that he understands and sympathizes with all classes, because he has in him the blood and traditions of all classes. The proletarian cannot un-

derstand the aristocrat, because the latter is on higher ground and has a larger vision. One can remember what one has been, even generations before, but only philosophers can visualize what they are becoming. Woodrow Wilson is a ruler. How clever of him to allow Bryan, of the Bourgeoisie (the fish out of water at present), to have his own way.

CHAPTER XVI.

There was some additional Country Club correspondence which I seem to have mislaid. It was not important; in fact none of it was important, save as a rack on which to hang some of my pet theories, also some of Nietzsche's, or perhaps it would be better to say, furnished tangible evidence of the correctness of those theories. This lost correspondence consisted of a sweet letter from Gratz, in which he expressed kindly feelings for me and hoped that I would make of myself "a decent, reliable and respectable citizen." I replied to him in a proper spirit of humility, such as one should adopt toward one's Saviour, and explained that he should have added the words "like me"—after "citizen"—also; that I had no desire to be a "fellow citizen" at all. Afterwards I sent the file of correspondence to a friend in St. Louis. He returned it with a note somewhat as follows: "Interesting, but what a waste of good brain stuff, what a casting of pearls before swine. You must conserve yourself for bigger things."

Of course he was right, in a sense, but I could see no reason why I should not continue to amuse myself at the Country Club's expense, so long as I saw fit, and really nothing is wasted—it can't be; and so I wrote this book at odd moments. Intellectual fun is the only kind in which one may indulge in a democracy without making oneself liable to arrest, and even then he isn't safe, but of all monotonous things a feeling of safety is the quintessence. Whenever I hear a man pleading for "love" and "justice" and "peace," I know he's a he-woman, a non-entity, a decadent. Love should never be spoken of. It is too delicate a thing to handle. To mention it vulgarizes it. One should live dangerously. To try to live safely is not to live at all. Only he who is forever trying to make himself safe is always in a state of fear, and nothing in this world is as bad as the fear of it. As for "justice," I doubt if God Himself knows what it is, but that all men are entitled to the same treatment, it is surely not.

I think the club was right in requesting my resignation. That we secured a divorce was a good thing for both of us. For them to not state the reason, however, was an unnecessary attempt to be vindictive. The club bored me, and I bored the club, in that I did not always allow the members to enjoy that smug complacency, which is the ultima Thule of the Pharisee. If one wishes the peace of the Walt Whitman cow, one must expect to be milked.

In all of my knocking about the world, from one coast to another, and from one country to another, and among all sorts and conditions of people, I have observed that invariably where money is concerned men are treacherous, but that, I have always held, is the system's fault and not the men's, and hence is to be accepted as a fact, and in no way enters into the realm of psychology. This case, however, is one in which all of the usual motives are lacking, and it remained for me to discover the motive, and thus add my little bit to philosophy.

It is geographical, too, in a way. It could not have occurred in any other than a provincial community. But as Nat Goodwin, the actor (though better known as the husband of his country), once remarked to me anent an unfair criticism: "You have to go to St. Louis to discover that you're rotten."

"Oh, pshaw, Nat," I replied, "it is better, as Caesar says, to be first in a village than second in Rome."

But Nat wouldn't let it pass. "If you're first in St. Louis you'll be last in Rome or anywhere else," he said, and then added in his dry way, "that is, if you hustle."

We hear St. Louis criticised from the standpoint of climate. That isn't the trouble, for its climate is no worse than that of other cities, and, besides, hear what Samuel Johnson says of climate. Boswell is speaking:

"I mentioned a friend of mine who had resided long in Spain and was unwilling to return to Britain." Johnson: "Sir, he is attached to some woman." Boswell: "I rather believe, sir, it is the fine climate which keeps him there." Johnson: "Nay, sir, how can you talk so? What is climate to happiness? What proportion does climate bear to the complex system of human life? You may advise me to go to Bologna and live that I may eat sausages. The sausages there are the best in the world; they lose much by being carried."

Not long since I met John Drew, the actor, on the street in New York. "Look here, Turner," he said, "I've been receiving most insulting letters from a collecting agency in St. Louis about a bill for automobile hire. Now, I never hired an automobile from anyone but you out there, and I think I paid before I left. Don't think, however," he added, "that is why I didn't go to St. Louis this year."

"Give me the ten, John," I said, "and refer the collecting agency to me."

He did so, and then joined me at lunch and the money was exchanged for a broiled pompano, a roasted duck and a bottle

of Chambertin. "Why don't you come to St. Louis any more, we miss you?" I asked.

"Shhhh," he answered with his finger to his lips, "one should never go where one is not wanted, and you," he continued, "you don't seem to stay there much!"

"Shhhh," I said, with my fingers to my lips, "one should not —," but he understood without my finishing the sentence.

There is no real reason why St. Louis should be a pariah among cities any longer; she might as well get over her grouch and smile and be pleasant like other places. What she needs is not Carnegie libraries and free bridges; she needs one or two devoted admirers who can sense her hidden charms, and whose intentions are honorable, to move around among her people—all of her people, from chauffeurs to captains of industry, and from working girls to the socially elect, and from the south side to the north side, and inject into them a get-together spirit, so that they all (including the Board of Governors of the Country Club—I would not ostracize anyone) may come to a better understanding, and make a religion of the words *Saint Louis*.

Oh, for a great, purifying holocaust of the dead district! After the sacrifice we could permit the English insurance companies, under the direction of Tom Barnett and Bill Crowell, to build for us the American Athens, and an Athens needs no B. M. L. nor City Club to advertise it.

When I said in an earlier paragraph that I was not religious, I, of course, meant in an orthodox way. Everyone is religious in his way. A man could not be a waiter unless he made a sort of religion of being a waiter. St. Louis is long on solid citizens, meaning a man who pays his bills on the first of the month (or would if he ran any bills), and does absolutely nothing else. St. Louis on the other hand is short on dilettantes and court jesters like myself, and be it remembered that no one but the court jester may tell the king the truth. If the solid citizens were really clever they'd endow me on condition that I never leave the city limits. But permit me to say that I will not accept a contract with the city unless it is endorsed by Tom Randolph, Russell Gardner and Jack Thompson, and yet Thos. H. West, of the Frisco Railroad, says that I am not a good business man. He must have overlooked the fact that I have traded St. Louis for New York, even. He has never made as good a bargain as that, I am sure, unless the Frisco receivership should turn out to be one.

What Goodwin said at that time was as true as any statement ever is. But St. Louis has changed since then and for the better. After the World's Fair it fell into the hands of the Philistines, headed by a misguided, narrow-visioned fanatic in the person of Joseph W. Folk, and it has been sick, very sick, ever since, but it is now convalescent. One standing off and looking at it from a distance can see that it is improving; perhaps not commercially, but for St. Louis to be ambitious commercially (in comparison with Chicago or New York), would be as if I

were to try and compete with the Steel Trust in the matter of making money. St. Louis is destined to be the center of art, culture and literature of the United States. It is to be a city of fine homes and fine people, with ideals above the Business Men's League. It has produced three poets who have attracted attention as far away as London. I refer to Orrick Johns, Zoe Akins and Sara Teasdale. William Marion Reedy is looked upon as one of America's great critics in literary circles; Augustus Thomas is constantly referred to as our greatest playwright. (Sad, but true.) Pulitzer was the greatest journalist the world has known; Clark McAdams is a more reliable and sweeter humorist than Mark Twain, and the St. Louis woman stands out as a splendid creature wherever one finds her.

There must be some quality about the Mississippi River which sweetens men, for it has produced a McAdams and a Clemens, and there, too, is Henry Turner, of Ellistoun, on the bluffs overlooking the junction of the Missouri and the Mississippi. He, also, is a poetic dreamer. He, too, seems to have absorbed some of the repose and sweetness, tenderness and strength which the great stream seems to communicate to her lovers. To have never heard his merry, musical, explosive laughter—to have missed its tonic quality—is to have been robbed of one of the real joys of life.

I wonder if all seriousness is not physiological or rather pathological. There is some connection between an over-serious mind and a sick body, but here is a question of cause and effect that is too much for me. I can find no starting-point—no thing to grip in endeavoring to determine whether ill-health causes seriousness or seriousness causes ill-health. There are certain diseases, of course, which cause a sense of gaiety, a feeling of optimism—locomotor ataxia for instance—but they are diseases of the brain. I am rather inclined to the opinion that a fixed idea, causing one to be over-serious for long periods will produce a pathological condition physiologically. Mere guesswork, however. I have never been serious for a long enough period to damage my own health, nor do I intend to be in the cause of science. Instead I have purchased a cruising-cabin boat and will spend the winter on the bosom of the mother of waters somewhere between St. Louis and the Gulf, in an effort to absorb some of the quality of insouciance which she seems to dispense to those whom she nurses.

CHAPTER XVII.

I am an optimist against my will. I wish to be a pessimist, for a pessimist can have no disappointments, but I cannot repress my feeling of optimism. The world is hell-bent toward nihilism, which is a condition of no ideals, no beliefs, absolute skepticism—in short, decadence (Omar Kiyamism—witness the increased use of alcohol per capita); a condition through which the world must pass, before it experiences another great ascending, healthy, exuberant period. Everything points to the conclusion that we are on the eve of violent and fundamental changes in valuations, particularly moral valuations. The decline of the influence of the church is a healthy sign. It indicates ultimate world improvement, a higher morality. We dare to live now for this world. We no longer require the promise of another existence in order to bear this one. Skepticism is always a sign of convalescence. To be not afraid to question, indicates good spirits. Faith (the will to believe that which we know is not true) is degeneracy; weariness, the desire to place the responsibility on someone else. If one claims to have faith in me, I understand the meaning of that. It is that he believes I have something to give away, something for nothing, and he is willing to take something for nothing, which is a characteristic of the descending man.

In a democracy, which is only incipient nihilism, all one has to do to gain distinction is to remain quiet, to not degenerate, which is perhaps the better plan, for if he exerts himself to ascend in a decadent period, he will go so high that he cannot be seen. The higher one soars the smaller he appears to those who cannot fly. In an age such as this, one must be contemptuous of the mob that he may not lose confidence in himself and go with it.

During Nietzsche's life, for instance, only the soles of his feet were visible to the next highest man. Now even an editor can see to his shoe tops and hence imagines that he is all feet; still that is "progress." He who ascends to the point where Nietzsche can be looked squarely in the eye, will surpass him. Even Nietzsche will be surpassed, but it will require centuries to accomplish it.

CHAPTER XVIII.

One should talk and act as one feels—nothing else matters. It is a short cut to one's goal. If one feels right, so much the better. If one feels wrong, so much the quicker is he out of his misery.

There was a period when I was lacerated by sympathy for the poor and disinherited, and realizing that charity was not only beyond my means, but that it was fundamentally a false palliative, inasmuch as anyone could see that it was like mopping up the bath room floor but neglecting to turn off the spigot, (an observation for the blind), I took up sociology with all my enthusiasm. I ran the gamut of "isms," and the more I saw of them, the more skeptical I became of all systems. There is no fundamental difference in them; no one "ism" is better than another, although some are far more plausible than others. The only scheme that will help the helpless, even temporarily, is to enlarge the earth, and that being impractical, the survival of the fittest theory becomes more and more apparently correct. Who are the fit? Why, those who survive under conditions as they are, and will be for sometime to come. No other answer is possible. The survival of the fittest, by some secret standard of nature's, seems to be the plan, and no one can change it, no, not even a Dr. Parkhurst or a Gratz.

"Free the land," says Henry George (whose "ism" is the most rational of them all which is why I concern myself with it). To what end please? That it may be occupied by the hovels of hosts of the unfit, i. e., those who cannot survive unless the land is freed—those who will breed like rabbits so long as they have an inch to stand on? I admit Mr. George's solution postpones the trouble, but only to make the problem larger in the end. Surely it solves nothing.

He insists that land held out of use is at the bottom of all of our ills, and yet the only land that is beautiful to contemplate is that held out of use. That in use cannot be seen, because it is covered with breweries, saloons, slums and other hideousities. Wheat fields and grazing lands are held out of use, according to George. It is not strange that his vision was limited. How could a printer-proletarian evolve a scheme for any class other than his own? Those possessing the foresight, the patience, the will to be alone—in short, a philosophy of life—are the only ones who can own land.

All of the "isms" are the result of what Nietzsche calls the "herding instinct" of the proletarian—the instinct to crowd together under one banner or another temporarily in order to overthrow the strong individual, or perhaps to test his strength. If I

fall before the herd, of whom I have become quite contemptuous, let me go, say I. It is my destiny. I am not strong enough, but if the herd is held in check by one man, no matter how he does it, I'll make my best obeisance to him. He is what we have been searching for, a real leader, sans a banner or an "ism"; in short, the higher type of man.

Sooner or later the weak and degenerate must be crowded off the earth, and without the assistance of the Eugenists either. To free the land is to prolong the disease and permit it to spread, and in the end make the matter more difficult to handle.

Of course, if one observes all of the laws he will perish, which is just as it should be, for if one has not sufficient mentality to see that the laws regulating personal conduct are made by the proletariat ostensibly to protect the weak, but, in reality, to destroy the strong, then he does not deserve to exist. All laws, save property laws, and those preservative of life, are based on the theory of the survival of the unfit, that is to say, the law-makers really believe that is their theory, because they are incapable of analyzing their own motives. The fact is that they, the lawmakers, crave power over the strong, and unconsciously, perhaps, use this method to obtain it.

In all the "isms" one hears much of the "big sob" about property being placed ahead of men. Property should be placed ahead of men. There is only a fixed amount of property. Most men do not know how to do anything else than reproduce themselves. Births can and should be prevented, but the sum total of land cannot be increased. Men exist for the purpose of serving the world (and one higher type of man serves it better than millions of a lower caste). The world does not exist in order to serve man. That conventional idea is merely his childish egotism. The satisfaction of men who have done great work is not translatable into ordinary language, which average men can understand. The supermen have a feeling of partnership with Nature herself, of serving her ends and being served by her in return. Their reward is an indescribable sense of power therefrom, although to the average man, they appear alone and deserted and merely eccentric. It is well that they do usually appear thus during their lives, for if the mob knew, it would crucify them.

There is one way and one only, you sentimentalists and underhanded cravers after power, you sneakers under the tent, that you can make the last man equal to property and that is by making him property, i. e., a slave; and to be freed of economic responsibility—the necessity for thought—is a desideratum for the slave type of man.

Whether it be right or wrong, judged by some abstract standard, the aristocracy of the future, the rulers of the world, will be the land owners. Only the land owner can fit himself to rule, for he is the only one who has real leisure and true power and thus can afford to be generous and sympathetic. Investment in commercial undertakings, subject to strikes and always

property at all. Land can be forgotten and still it increases in value, so that the normally acquisitive man (and all men are acquisitive in some degree) is satisfied, and can devote himself to the study of government, literature and the arts. In short, he can perfect himself, and for his living from the community, make himself valuable to the community.

Private land ownership is the only check on population. It is to the interest of the mill-owner and the mill-laborer that as many be born as possible. No matter how feeble, each child is an asset, so long as child-labor is permitted. The land owner must have population to give value to his land, but it must be a healthy population, able and inclined to till the soil, from which dependent on management and legislation, is not, in a real sense, spring the finer men and women. The land owner does not use up human material, he strengthens and develops it, not that he is a philanthropist, but because it is to his interest, and to expect human nature to be disinterested is not to comprehend it. God deliver me from a so-called disinterested man. To find out another's real interest, is half of the fun of the game of life. It is to discover the weak spot—the Achilles heel—of the holy hypocrite.

Labor is no doubt noble, still everyone wishes to escape it. The Georgian idea is based on the theory that no one should be allowed to escape it, that one by his own efforts must not endeavor to free himself from the necessity for labor, and that he must see to it that those who have fought or worked themselves free are put back into bondage. The fact is that there is no freedom save to own land or to be an artist. Everything else requires more labor than it is really worth. George would place the courageous, independent-minded pioneers who risked life itself in unknown dangers (in order to escape civilization and acquire land) on the same footing with the jackals who followed the commissary wagon.

It would be as fair to say that one who repeated the foregoing, without placing it between quotation marks, was my equal, for I am an intellectual pioneer.

And why shouldn't industry be taxed? Is industry, compelled by necessity from the outside, or inability to be calm from the inside, the end of existence? Is it even superior to idleness? To be able to be idle indicates a philosophical temperament, and the philosopher is the true creator of all values. The more a busy man is taxed, the busier he will be. The more money you take away from bees, the more they will produce. It is the *raison d'être* of the bee. As long as there is no honey in the hive, the bee will continue to produce it. He is not a philosopher; he is a bee. The ability to be idle cannot be taxed. It is an inherent quality, and therefore superior, for idlers are allies of Nature. One might as well speak of taxing the lilies of the field.

And what do these prodigious laborers bring forth? Usually a mouse. I am weary of hearing of the number of hours Edison works each day. What he has done seems to me of relatively

no importance. I would not give up any one of the great poets or philosophers for electric light. If it came to the point, I should choose the tallow dip and the poets, rather than electric light and the New York Journal. The busy man has no time for thought. That is why he is so busy.

If it is not more important to be than to do; if doing does not lead to being, then what is the purpose of action?

Marxism, Socialism, Anarchism, Communism and Syndicalism are merely nauseating, but Georgism is subtle and poisonous because so passionately sincere and so perfectly logical, if its false premise be accepted. Accept the premise that all of humanity should and wishes to labor and that the world is elastic, and Single Tax is inescapable. Eliminate aristocracy, art, literature, beauty and human nature and substitute labor and a limitless world, and you will be perforce a Single Taxer. Even assume that slavery is wrong, that is slavery by any other name, such as one man employing another to work for him because of the latter's need, and you will probably be a convert to Single Tax.

Georgism strikes at the very roots (to be somewhat platitudinous), of our social system, and yet suggests no better one. It is potentially more dangerous than a million McNamaras would be, for it is unanswerable to the man in the street to whom a world view is impossible. Land ownership is the last fortress of the present order. Our governing class had best forget "white slavery" and other vagaries of the minds of naïf legislators. We had best get over the peculiarly American notion that vice is crime. We had best conserve the energy spent on preventing "spooning" in the parks and turn our attention to Georgism, before we discover that the fox has run away with the cheese, and that we have been despoiled of our birthrights, while we argued over non-essentials. The fight against labor has been lost. Let us forget that and beat Georgism into a pulp.

Imagine the United States as a small island rather than a large one and attempt to apply Single Tax. For instance, there is a city, let us say, in the centre of the island, and the land surrounding it is taxed on its value, created by the increasing population of the city. This would cause the holders of the property to erect structures thereon in order to prevent its confiscation by taxation. Of course the effect of this would be to bring into the tax zone the next surrounding area of land, and it would have to be built upon, thus creating additional value—compounding it so to speak. Labor would be in great demand, so that the more children born the merrier. In fact it would be a veritable proletarian orgy. But the question naturally arises, how long would it be before the island was completely covered with structures to the water's edge (an ideal condition from a Georgian or labor point of view), and how long after that before a real battle at close quarters would take place to determine who were fit and consequently were to survive? No doubt history would repeat itself. The true ruling class, temporarily dethroned, i. e.,

the aristocratic thinkers, would have foreseen the result and prepared against it. They would have cornered the market on the sinews of war and would destroy all of the proletariat whom they did not overpower, and after that, until another Henry George sprang up, life would be life once more and cease to be an "ism."

And yet Single Tax stands at the top in the realm of economics, which Carlyle has called "the dismal science," though it isn't a science at all. Fortunately for us, Georgism has taken hold in England, which happens to be a small island, and it is possible it may be exploded on the other side of the water before it becomes a fact on this side. There isn't an "ism" so far invented that is worth a shovelful of ashes. Men who desire to herd together under a banner, reveal by that very token their lack of anything approaching a ruler instinct. Rulers are lonely, solitary men and silent.

It would be cruel to teach the proletariat the meaning of futurism in art. Why tell him that the immediate future is chaos—nihilism—and thus rob ourselves of the honey he produces and himself of his *raison d'être*? Rather let him think that he is overcoming us. It keeps him cheery while he works, just as rustabouts chant hymns about another world while they carry bales of cotton. Why should anything be accelerated or retarded? Life is nothing but life, and none of us is God.

Nowadays in our Christian democracy, when the ruling class wants anything, it is called "class legislation," but single tax, which is labor legislation, is all right of course. All legislation is class legislation. How could it be otherwise? Life is not a Sunday School picnic, held for the purpose of pinning a blue ribbon on the most virtuous maiden in the village. Life is a battle from start to finish, which it should be for men. I hate to see women in it, but when men have degenerated as at present, and women have surpassed them, the women must take up the fight. They will get the vote, use it until they have straightened things out for themselves and then forget all about voting. Votes for women means that women want to be heard. When they have said their say, I believe we men will see their point, agree to it, and women will thereafter gradually cease to become a factor in government.

Life, it seems safe to say, will always be a struggle between classes and between individuals, a never-ending, strengthening struggle for power. Show me a man who does not desire the feeling of power that comes with knowledge or self-development—either physical or mental, and I will show you a decadent or a "possum." It is not the business of men to legislate for the weak. Conservation of the race is woman's sole concern. She has an instinct for the fit. A true woman will sacrifice home, honor, ease, and all the other knick-knacks, for love, i. e., for the opportunity to mate with the higher type of man, by natural standards, in order that she may produce something still higher. All of the laws and punishments that mediocre men can invent in the name

of "morality" will not deflect Madame Nature from her ultimate purpose one inch, which purpose is the higher man. Single tax which attempts to arbitrarily place labor higher than things so high that labor cannot see them, is contrary to the scheme of things. All laws which attempt to regulate conduct are reactionary. The owners of the land are the owners of the world, and the owners of the world will rule it sooner or later, as they have done in former times.

I am familiar with life in most of the capitals of the world. Undoubtedly there are great numbers in distress, but nothing in comparison to the number of "representatives" of those in distress. The number of the latter, i. e., single taxers, preachers, journalists, novelists, moralists and philanthropists is appalling. I always deal with principals.

There is nothing in sociology. It was sociology that produced the frame of mind responsible for the following verse. If sociology has ever produced anything more than an unpleasant mood, I have been unable to discover it. What follows is, of course, morbid and anything that causes morbidity must be not even useless, which is my opinion of the efficacy of sociology. I must have been reading Henry George on the early morning on which I gave birth to this jeremiad:

"Sweet, silent night, you'll soon be gone,
For in the East I see the dawn,
Which presages the shameful day,

The garish sun, the clanging car,
The slowly fading morning star,
The prelude to the tragic play.

With hunted eyes, cheeks painted red,
The weary harlot seeks her bed,
Thrice o'er she's earned her pay.

I hear the whistles, loud and shrill,
Those summons to the shop and mill,
They starve who disobey.

And now the cosmic hippodrome
Will take its toll from every home,
The children from their play.

I hear the tread of many feet
That hurry ever on to meet
The merciless beasts of prey.

Each sweat shop, with its poisoned air,
Each store and mill will take its share
Of human toil and shame.

That in the church across the way,
The parasites may preach and pray
In the Lord Jesus' Name,

That you, my mistress, sleeping there,
May jewels, silks and satins wear.
Ah, God, a stupid game.

To speak overmuch at this time is not to know. To know is not to speak. Writers nowadays are not teachers; they are pupils. I am a human question mark. I desire to be refuted. I would not wish to be dumb, but I would like to possess, in greater degree, the power to be silent. It is useless to talk to will-less decadents. I know a woman who has been beaten, crushed, caluminated, outlawed, and yet, except when she is gay, she is as silent as the sphinx, which is why I admire her. She is on higher ground, which means that she is deeper, than I am. When I have learned to be silent (when I am not gay), I too, shall have mastered life. We must love that which is both higher and deeper than ourselves. Cheer up, you lonely ones—you finer men and women—your day, or that of your children, is not so far distant.



CHAPTER XIX.

But about the Country Club. Even my real friends would say nothing, would gaze into space, and assume a look of patient skepticism, when I iterated that I did not know the cause of the Board's action. I do not blame my friends. I should have to know a man's character very well, before I could believe that a body of so-called respectable men had, without cause, done such a thing to him. It is not reasonable. It is anything but plausible, and yet there it stands, an incontrovertible fact that Daniel G. Taylor, an attorney in the Third National Bank Building, who has dined at my table more than once, and at my father's house too often to enumerate (and it is no small matter to feed Taylor); that Benjamin Gratz, a merchant, I believe, but comparatively a stranger to me; Geo. D. Markham, an insurance agent, and a casual acquaintance, and one-time competitor; Harry Potter, a bond broker's clerk, whom I had regarded as a tentative sort of friend; Thomas H. West, Jr., a clerk in the St. Louis Union Trust Company, with whom I was on more or less familiar terms; George P. Doan, a commission merchant, whom I had known pleasantly for years, and G. H. Walker, a stock broker, did sit around that board, and did knife me in the back, out of pure deviltry, so far as I can learn from any fact which they have put in my possession.

It is possible that Taylor may have been the instigator of this farce comedy. He prides himself on his Machiavelian qualities, viz., his embrace is dangerous. If he could care as much for some one else as he does for Taylor, the romance of Paul and Virginia would appear as a vulgar liason. He is quite capable of wishing to undo me, but I think lacked the necessary power.

Far be it from me to criticise the Honorable Taylor, or for that matter Michiavelianism, for I am aware that Macaulay has written an able defense of that doctrine, holding that in an age when underhandedness was the custom and deemed the quintessence of cleverness, that Machiaveli was a superior man; I merely maintain that "it is not being done this season"—that the fine Italian hand was entitled to be admired in its day perhaps—but that the Honorable Taylor is distinctly out of fashion.

Markham? No, he'd be afraid to send a letter like that through the mails, without consulting his attorney.

Doan? A perfect lady, with all the airs and graces of the sterner sex; who would never take the initiative in anything unless it were to run, if we happened to meet on the street.

Thos. H. West, Jr.? A good-natured son of his father, who has troubles of his own. No, it wasn't Tom.

Gratz? Never. A kind-hearted old simpleton, who not only doesn't know anything, he doesn't even suspect anything.

While he paid an absurdly high price for the presidency of the Country Club, and would like to get his money's worth by insulting his superiors from behind that bulwark, the original letter bore traces of education, and that lets Gratz out.

Walker? A great financier among Parsifals, and a Parsifal among financiers, but no Parsifal at his more serious occupations, bridge and poker. I place a (?) there, notwithstanding his denials, for I find I am puzzled in trying to explain to myself why he sent me the message by Benoist, and why he made a proposition to withdraw the original letter if I would resign. Why was he so desirous of my elimination? A plain denial by him does not satisfy my reason, although I am quite sure he is a man of the highest integrity. However, tell me the sort of stories a man enjoys—the kind of humor he appreciates—and I can tell you what that man is. Walker, for instance, has a story which I have heard him recite numerous times with great glee. To him it seems to embody all there is of wit and quaint humor. He tells it as having happened to a certain great financier and high official in the Rock Island Railway. It is about as follows:

The certain financier was dining one evening when the butler announced a caller, who was shown in. He proved to be an old friend of the millionaire's in his less prosperous days, and told a story of hard luck—a big family and starving children. The millionaire listened attentively to his story, occasionally wiping a tear away, and when the caller had finished his recital, turned to the butler. "Show him out, Smithers," he said, "he's breaking my heart."

As a matter of fact the story originated with the diabolical La Rochefoucauld and his valet, but can be made to apply to any rich man, although it seems to me libelous if not credited to its proper origin.

I never see Walker with his friends but that I am reminded of what a certain Irish poet and philosopher said when he was asked if he was a friend of Bernard Shaw's. "Shaw," replied the scape-goat of the English aristocracy, "Why he hasn't an enemy in the world," and then he added thoughtfully, "but his friends don't like him."

My goodness, I nearly forgot Potter. He is always being forgotten. Pardon me, Harry. No, it was not you.

It has been suggested by a person not directly connected with the Board, that a woman scorned was at the bottom of the matter, but that shows a failure to comprehend my temperament. I, Gargantua Turner, the rake and roué, scorn a woman! The idea is preposterous.

If I may be pardoned the redundancy, I wish to emphasize the point that it is the psychological question involved in this case that interests me. Why was the letter written, is a question that will not down in my mind. I am so constituted that I must find a solution to my queries, if I would sleep or eat, and to those that are insoluble from any facts at hand, I can only apply my reasoning powers. In this instance I am refused data,

therefore I can only speculate. It is a mystery that perhaps will never be solved, but in my own mind, I have settled it, and intend to think no more about it, when I have finished this bit of typewriting and handed it to the publisher.

If the original letter had been framed as follows, all this would have been avoided and I should have had the usual dull summer. Had the Secretary of the Board of Governors of the New St. Louis Country Club been as honest and fearless as he was ambitious and cowardly, he would have written this sort of a letter, in place of the one he did write:

"Dear Mr. Turner:

"There is a member of this Board who is insanely jealous of you. We think without reason. However, he has quite a little influence over our financial destinies, and insists that we request your resignation. We regret the necessity for it, but as you can see we are helpless. If you will resign, it will relieve us all of much embarrassment."

To which I should have replied:

"Gentlemen:

"My resignation hereby.

"Please assure your member that his jealousy is unfounded, although he pays my reputation as a connoisseur of femininity a most subtle compliment."

And there the matter would have ended and I would have had little or nothing to occupy me and might have even gotten into mischief, who knows? As it is I am indebted to the Board of Governors of the Country Club for the only intelligent answer I received to my article called, "What Shall I Do?" but still the struggle of the proletariat to humiliate the aristocrat goes merrily on.

While there is no intention on my part to point a moral and adorn a tale in this instance, I cannot refrain from calling attention to the utter futility of jealousy, that gnaweth like a worm in the bud. Here it is seen that the green-eyed monster is at the bottom of much misunderstanding, that greatest of evils to which I referred in one of my earlier passages. However, I have come to regard jealousy as a sickness of the soul that ravages the intellect, sours the milk of human kindness and adds bitterness to existence—for the one who suffers from it. I could wish no worse evil to befall an enemy than that he should become jealous. It sometimes leads to murder, but the murdered one is far better off than the murderer. Death is nothing. It may be, as Socrates has observed, the best thing that can happen to a man. At least no one can argue conclusively to the contrary. But to be jealous would seem to be perhaps the worst calamity to befall one. Poor little Dan Tracy's road was made a bit harder by it, and he is as fine a patrician youth as one will meet in many a day.

The world has been good to me. It has given me on a silver platter, to speak figuratively, what I see other men struggling,

stealing and knifing each other for. I am deeply grateful for life. I hear people talking of things they take to put them to sleep. I wish I could stay awake all of the time. No day (well, very few days) have ever been long enough for me. My own thoughts are my best companions.

I am still interested in the ego, and I still think that the soul of a great woman is the most wonderful thing in the world. One may be interested in a thing, such as the ego, however, and yet not wish particularly to preserve it. I am rather indifferent to my own welfare, and I am a rather good fatalist. I would make excellent material out of which to manufacture a bomb to be used in furthering a hopeless cause. Perhaps a little of the fighting blood of old General Lee and the rest did trickle through after all.

CHAPTER XX.

And now to play my favorite role, the one of him who is not without honor save in his own country.

To have written a history of the past is important, but to be able to write a history of the future—to be already looking backward at the future—that is genius. Certain philosophical discoveries placed in combination produce certain results in the realm of philosophy, just as certain chemicals produce certain results in the chemical world.

This age of materialism cannot last much longer. The types of men with which I have just been occupied are passing. The man of "neither wit, nor words, nor worth, action nor utterance, nor the power of speech to stir men's blood" is seeing the writing on the wall. We have wearied of our toys. We have conquered the sea, the air, and to a certain degree, space. The whole world has been explored, and there is no more escape for the world-weary people of the types of my ancestors. If one is tired unto death of trickery, knavery, lies and treachery, he must stand and wait, or else fight for the return of the natural rank of man. There is no other thing he can do.

We are on the way, though it is a long way, to the return to a view of life as it was in the ascendant period of ancient Greece and Egypt. After nihilism, we are to reverence blood, art, poetry, idleness, philosophy, beauty and physical perfection once more, but we will, in addition, reverence that which the Athenians did not—the soul of man, which means that we will

adopt a healthier, more innocent, less serious attitude toward the senses.

We will forget sociology and "morality," and put our house in order for the coming of the superman by building good roads, deepening the rivers and beautifying the world. What is the Nietzschean superman? He is to be one with the heart of a Christ, the intellect of a Nietzsche, and the body of an Apollo. Visionary? Yes, but what can be visualized, will be, or else imagination is a mockery, and my imagination has never yet betrayed me. The only way we can help the lowest man is to recognize the highest when he comes.

Self-preservation is not to be the first law of life. Soul preservation is to be the first law. The soul of the convict is to commune with the soul of the virgin, and the soul of the Magdalene is to commune with the soul of the artist. Life is to be life. Isms will disappear. The pyramid will take form again. In the meantime:

"I hae a penny to spend
There thanks to naebody.

"I hae naething to lend,
And I'll borrow frae naebody.

"I am naebody's lord
And I'll be slave to naebody,

"But I hae a gude braid sword
And I'll take dunts frae naebody."



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